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NEDL TRANSFER



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THE

JUS. IN WINSOR,
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

BACHELOR OF SALAMANCA

TRANSLATED

FROM THE FRENCH OF M. LE SAGE,

AUTHOR OF GIL BLAS, DEVIL ON TWO STICKS, ETC., ETC.

BY

JAMES TOWNSEND.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE BACHELOR

OF

SALAMANCA.

PART FOURTH.

Chapter First.

Don Cherubin de la Ronda, fifteen months after his marriage, becomes the most amorous of husbands.—Don Gabriel carries off his wife.—He pursues her ravisher in vain.—He gives up the pursuit, and resolves to go to Mexico.

IN this manner then did my two brothers-in-law and myself live with our wives. Don Gregorio and Don Manoel gave me every day new proofs of their esteem, as I, on my part, failed not to treat them with the most respectful deference and attention. What is most worthy of notice is, that our ladies were not less united than ourselves. They scarcely

ever contradicted each other, and when such a thing did happen, it was always without bitterness, and their disputes were always terminated by laughter.

To crown our happiness, we were soon made sensible that heaven had blessed our marriages. Ismenia in about ten months was delivered of a boy, Donna Paula of a daughter, and Donna Francisca, my sister, brought into the world two at once, as if to make amends for her former sterility, or perhaps to convince Clevillente that it was in his arms alone she could be fruitful.

Our society, delighted with these fortunate accouchements, celebrated them by feasts which formed occasions for rejoicing to the whole village. In fact, we had now no wish ungratified. In whatever spot we were, joy reigned incessantly among us ; and though our pleasures had in our own families an inexhaustible source, we had notwithstanding a great number of friends who came to augment them by partaking them with us. When we were at Clevillente's house, the hidalgos of the environs afforded us good company there ;

and when we resided at Alcaraz, Don Manoel's house became the rendezvous of the gentry of the town, as well as of the illustrious strangers who came there.

We enjoyed a felicity the most perfect, and I, in particular, was satisfied with my lot: in Donna Paula's arms, I found a source of the most pure and inexpressible pleasures, and though married, I loved her more than ever. Too happy had the blessings I enjoyed been of longer duration. I thought I had arrived at the end of my misfortunes; but I had not yet undergone my destiny, which had evils in store for me, greater than any which had yet befallen me.

Among a number of cavaliers who joined in our parties of pleasure, there was one who called himself Don Gabriel de Monchique. He stated himself to be from the kingdom of Algarves, and gave himself out as a relation of the Count of Villa Nova. In traveling through Spain out of curiosity, he had stopped at Alcaraz, and we had become acquainted with him. Besides having the equipage of a grandee, he was extremely ceremonious, and

his manners were so noble, that he could not be suspected as a man of a common class; one would rather have taken him for a young prince, who was traveling incognito through the Spanish monarchy, than for a private gentleman. I never saw a man who had a better air, or more agreeable figure: nor was his mind inferior to the elegance of his person. My brothers-in-law and myself were charmed with him from the first moment, and spared no pains to acquire his friendship. We took pleasure in introducing him to our ladies, who, perhaps, secretly taxed us with imprudence, in bringing into their presence so dangerous an object. As for us husbands, instead of being alarmed for the consequences, we acted like true Frenchmen, by admitting him into our society at all risks.

He soon gave us to understand that we had let the wolf into the sheepfold, and unfortunately for me, my wife was the sheep he took a fancy to devour. I saw very plainly that she was not displeasing to him; but this circumstance was very far from alarming me: I only laughed at it. I sometimes congratu-

lated Donna Paula in jest, on having made a conquest of such a handsome man, and she in the same style would reply, that she was happy in being able to make me a sacrifice so flattering. Nay more ! I made myself an amusement out of Monchique's love. Far from having any inquietude on the subject, I congratulated myself in secret, on seeing so amiable a rival sigh in vain. In a word, I conceived the sister of Don Manoel too prudent to step aside from the path of duty ; but I relied on her prudence too far. The gallant, who had formed the design of seducing her, succeeded but too well, through the agency of an old waiting woman, who had obtained a great ascendancy over the mind of my wife, and whose fidelity she found the means of corrupting.

The most singular circumstance in this seduction was, that it was managed so secretly, that I had not the slightest suspicion of it. My wife was even already far off from Alca-raz, when I was informed that she had disappeared with Antonia her maid, as had also

Don Gabriel, and that in all probability this cavalier had carried them off.

I gave no credit whatever to the first report which was brought me on the subject, in which, to my apprehension, there was not the slightest probability. "No, no," cried I, "it is not possible that my wife, whose virtue has been unshaken to this moment, should begin by carrying matters to such an extremity as that: this would, indeed, be a most extraordinary coup d'esai. I should have been less surprised at this adventure, had the wife of one of my brothers-in-law been the heroine of it; for such a thing would suit them better than Donna Paula, whose conduct has been hitherto irreproachable. Notwithstanding it is she, who, in spite of the excellent education she has had, has just covered herself with infamy! How could this possibly have happened? Don Gabriel must have employed force to carry her off. But by what dexterity was he enabled to tear her from the bosom of her family and the arms of her husband? By what enchantment has he been able to effect

this crime, without leaving a single trace of it behind? This event confounds me."

Clevillente and Pedrilla not knowing what to think of this rape, were no less astonished at it than myself. We did not, however, content ourselves with thinking about the business; but all three made the most vigorous exertions to discover the route which the ravisher had taken with his prey. We made, both on the side of Murcia and of Valencia, the most diligent researches, all of which were ineffectual. We concluded that Monchique had gained the coast of Carthagena, and embarked there on board some vessel prepared by his orders to transport him to Portugal with his Helen. I stopped at this conjecture, and resolving to follow this new Paris, I prepared to go and seek him in the kingdom of the Algarves, where I flattered myself I should find him.

Don Manoel, not considering himself less interested in obtaining satisfaction for the proceeding of Don Gabriel, was absolutely determined on accompanying me, notwithstanding all I could say to turn him from his

design, wishing nothing so much, as to convince me that a brother, such as himself, was not less sensible than a husband of the affront done to his family. I had no small difficulty in persuading him to leave to myself the care of our common vengeance. He yielded, however, to my persevering requests, which were seconded by the tears of his wife. I therefore prepared myself to follow Monchique; but before my departure I begged Don Manoel to charge himself with the care of having his niece, my daughter, educated, and of the administration of my rents. Then, having plentifully supplied myself with gold and jewels, as with a foresight that I was to be a long while absent from Alcaraz, I took leave of my brothers-in-law and their wives, whom I did not quit without exciting their tears, nor without shedding them abundantly myself. The ladies in particular were much moved when we bade farewell, whether because they were really afflicted at my departure, or because they were still good comedians.

I proceeded to the port of Vera, where I embarked with a lacquey, on whose courage

and fidelity I could rely, in a vessel freighted for Lagos, a town which forms the point of the kingdom of the Algarves, on the sea coast. I was no sooner arrived there, than I began to make inquiry for Don Gabriel Monchique, and as they informed me that he was not known in Lagos, I went from town to town endeavouring to obtain an account of him. I passed through Tavira Faro, Sagres; in a word, all the kingdom of the Algarves, without deriving any other fruit from my researches, than the mortification of having made them in vain. I was in despair at not meeting my enemy, and respired only vengeance.

What rhodomontade, will perhaps exclaim, some of my readers, who remember the business of Don Antonio de Lorca, and the difficulty I had to bring myself to a resolution of engaging in a combat, two against two! It is, however, a certain fact, that I would willingly have discovered Don Gabriel, to expose myself with him to the chance of having my throat cut. I must have become brave since that time, or else my injured honour inspired

me with a spirit of vengeance which supplied the place of valor.

Be this as it may, Toston, my valet, who began to be tired of so many useless journeys, said to me one day, "Signor, we are both tiring ourselves to no purpose. Let us leave off running over Portugal, after a man who may have directed his course to Flanders, or perhaps to Italy. Besides, do you know whether the lady who has been carried off deserves that you should expose your life for her. As to me, if you will permit me to speak my mind, I fear that she travels without regret with Don Gabriel, or rather with an adventurer, for I am much mistaken if this gallant be not a new Guzman de Alfarache, or something like him. If such were the case, would it not be much better to abandon a faithless wife to her evil destiny, than to entertain the desire of living with her again?" "Assuredly," replied I. "Do not imagine that I think otherwise than yourself about the matter. If I knew that she had voluntarily left me, my contempt for her would prevent me from seeking her any longer. What do I say? Instead

of continuing my search, I should look upon her as an infamous wretch, from whom I could not possibly place myself at too great a distance. But I cannot believe her so guilty."

"What prejudice!" resumed my confident. "Is it possible that you cannot with the good sense you possess, imagine the possibility of a hitherto virtuous wife, ceasing to be so when vigorously assailed by the attentions of a handsome man? What a mistake! I judge less favourably than you of Donna Paula, and I have particular reason for doubting her virtue. I must make you acquainted with it. I one day saw Don Gabriel and old Antonia conversing in private, with an air of mystery. I am sure that you were interested in their discourse, or rather, that they were concerting together the plan which they meditated, and in which my lady was, in fact, in concert with them."

This zealous servant told me so many other things, and returned so often to the charge, that he came at last to persuade me that I had been deceived by a hypocritical wife. I no longer doubted it; and immediately pass-

ing from one extreme to the other, "Toston," cried I, "you have opened my eyes. Yes, I have been the dupe of pretended virtue: certain circumstances which you have related, convince me of it but too well. Oh! heaven, how great has been my blindness! Donna Paula is a perfidious wretch, whom I will no longer remember but to detest." "I am delighted," replied Toston, "to see you in this mind. Heaven be praised for it! Come, my dear master, let us no longer run after one who has deserved your hatred: let us return to Alcaraz, where Don Manoel and Don Gregorio, your brothers-in-law, and what is more, your friends, will assist you in banishing her from your memory."

"Ah! Toston," replied I, "what have you ventured to propose to me? You ought rather to counsel me to pass the Pillars of Hercules, and to go into the wilds of Africa to hide my disgrace and my name. I feel an invincible repugnance to beholding Alcaraz again, after the mortal blow which my honour has received there. I would rather keep from it forever, or at all events for a few

years." "Well," said he, "since you make so much difficulty about returning to your friends, let us take another course. Let us sail to the West Indies. After all the wonders I have heard of Mexico, I should be very glad, if you would go and see that charming country, which deserves the preference over all the climates in the world; a country in which reigns, according to account, an eternal spring, where sick persons are scarcely ever seen, where the entrails of the earth are silver, and where, in a thousand places, the rivers run over golden sands. It is there, my dear master, it is there you ought to go." "You have inspired me with a wish to do so, my child," replied I. "I am pleased with the idea: let us set out for New Spain. The thing is decided, and I am determined to undertake the voyage. Perhaps it will enable me the more easily to forget the unworthy sister of Don Manoel."

I had no sooner taken this resolution, which was, in effect, better than that of persisting in my search after a woman who shunned me, than I proceeded to Cadiz, where I had not

to wait a week for an opportunity of embarking for Mexico. I found a merchantman which was on the point of sailing for Vera Cruz, and hastened to avail myself of this convenience.

Chapter Second.

Don Cherubin de la Ronda sails from Cadiz and arrives at Vera Cruz, where he hires mules to proceed by land to Mexico.—Of the curious conversation which he had on the first day of his journey with his muleteer, and of the stories which Tobias relates.—He conceives great expectations.

IN order to spare my reader a tedious journal of my passage to the Indies, I shall content myself with stating that after having experienced some perils at sea, I arrived happily at San Juan de Ulhua, otherwise called Vera Cruz. As it is customary to travel on mules from this City to Mexico, I begged the master of the inn to recommend me a muleteer. He sent for one, and presenting him to me, "Signor Gentleman," said he, "here is, without contradiction, the best muleteer in this country. He will supply you with very good mules, and will take particular care of your property. He is, besides, a witty and good

humoured lad, who will amuse you with his songs, and the recital of a thousand little tales with which his memory is stuffed. Is not this the fact, Master Tobias?" continued he, turning to the muleteer.

"Yes, Signor Gutierrez," replied the muleteer, "I have, thanks be to God, so great a quantity of those goods in my bag, that the gentleman will be in no want of them between this and Mexico, although we have eighty good leagues to travel. It is now about two months ago," added he, "since I took thither a fat friar of the Order of Mercy, and on the road I related to him such a number of stories, that I thought he would have burst with laughter."

I judged by this answer that Master Tobias was a babbler, and I was not sorry for it. "He may," thought I, "sometimes fatigue my ears with his songs and tales; but in recompense, he will sometimes divert me. I am even of opinion that he will inform me, on some matters, which I am desirous of knowing. As for Toston, his joy was so much the greater, as he hoped that a man of his

character might draw me out of the melancholy into which at times I fell in spite of myself, the image of Donna Paula in the power of Monchique incessantly arising in my mind.

On the morrow, as soon as it was day, Master Tobias, agreeably to our engagement, entered the court yard of the inn with four good mules, of which there was one for me, one for himself, the third for my servant, and the last was destined to carry my trunk and a portmanteau, which contained all my effects. We set out on our journey, and were scarcely half a league on the road, ere Master Tobias gave employment to a strong voice which might have done honour to a chaunter of the cathedral. He thundered forth a number of couplets composed in the time of Carlos V. upon the conquest of Mexico. I was too fond of my country's glory not to hear with pleasure the exploits of the valiant Cortez and his companions; but, besides that I had a thousand times heard the incredible recital of that conquest, the verses which Master Tobias was singing did not render it very agree-

able to the ear; the poetry not being quite adequate to the dignity of the subject.

After having borne about twenty couplets of the same air, I interrupted the singer, who tired me, though, in fact, his verses were ridiculous enough to have amused me. For my sins it came into my head to say, "You sing marvellously well, Master Tobias; but enough of it for the present, my friend. Signor Gutierrez, my host, told me, as you know, that you have an infinitude of diverting histories: will you relate one?" "Most willingly," replied he, "and rather ten than one, to convince you that Gutierrez has told you the truth. I will even," continued he, with a malicious smile, "since he has made me welcome with the histories I am acquainted with, begin with his own, which will, perhaps, appear to you pleasant enough." He then made me his recital nearly in the following words:

"The Signor Gutierrez, a native of Zamora, having made a journey to Portugal, married there the daughter of a citizen of Santarem, both young and pretty. About a month after his marriage, he embarked with

her at Lisbon for Vera Cruz, with a design of settling there. Hoping to make a fortune in this town, he hired a house, the same which he now occupies, and turned innkeeper. He soon perceived that he had done a very good thing in coming to Vera Cruz, for his house was always filled with guests drawn thither by the gentility of his wife. Nothing was spoken of in the town but the beautiful Portuguese (so she was called), and it might be said that she made as many conquests as there went young men to her house. Gutierrez, naturally jealous, could not without terror behold this concourse of gallants; and to withdraw his wife from the eyes of men, he shut her up in a room, where he had her food carried to her by an old black slave who possessed his confidence. You may easily imagine that a husband who treated his wife in this way, without having any reason to complain, and purely out of jealousy, could not fail to render himself odious to all who knew of his tyranny, that is to say, the whole town, for there was nobody ignorant of it. Every person, taking an interest in the fate of the beautiful Portu-

guese, put up prayers to Heaven that she might speedily be released from her tyrant; and this was speedily accomplished. The black, who alone was permitted to enter the apartment of this lady, hearing her every day groaning and lamenting, was touched with her distress; so that one fine night he released her from slavery, and disappeared with her from Vera Cruz; neither of them having been since seen or heard of."

The muleteer here stopped, to give way to his laughter at the expense of Gutierrez. As I was rather serious, Tobias thought that this story was not to my taste; and to put me into a gayer humour, he related a number of others, which, in his own opinion at least, were so extremely diverting, that I thought he would have burst with laughter, like the fat friar of the Order of Mercy whom he had conducted before us: as for me, I had little inclination to bear him company in his merriment, the story of a seduced wife, having put me in a frame of mind little calculated for the enjoyment of buffoonery. Toston being well aware why I did not laugh, and remarking

that I even wished Tobias and his tales at the devil, said to him, in order to change the discourse, "What you have been saying is extremely pleasant; but have you any objection that we should talk a little about Mexico? You, who are so well acquainted with that great town, must be able to inform us of some interesting particulars. What do you conceive is the most worthy of attention there?" "Five things," replied Tobias, "the women, the dresses, the horses, the streets, and the carriages of the nobility, which surpass in magnificence and beauty those of any other court in Europe without exception. It is true that to ornament them, they spare neither gold nor silver. They even employ for that purpose precious stones, with the finest silks of China. The horses have bridles enriched with fine pearls: their bits are of silver; and one would suppose from their proud movement, that they are sensible of their advantage of being the most perfect animals of their species.

"Let us now come to the streets," continued he: "they are of an uncommon width;

a thing extremely necessary in a town where fifteen thousand carriages are in motion every day. But one must, at the same time, admire the good order of them, for there is not a town in the world where they are kept cleaner : and it would be a pity that it should be otherwise, on account of the shops, which present an air of opulence nowhere else to be seen. Those, among others, in the Goldsmith's-street, are filled with immense wealth, and most extraordinary workmanship."

"I am most curious about the women, Master Tobias," interrupted Toston. "Your impatience is just," replied the muleteer. "What I have to tell you about the women certainly merits attention. The Spanish ladies of Mexico are generally beautiful, and their beauty is considerably heightened by their dress. They have such a prodigious quantity of jewels, that they appear more brilliant than the stars. What luxury ! what magnificence ! One ought to go and see them towards the close of the day in the Alameda, which is the promenade for the gentry and principal citizens. It is there you may

judge of the excessive expense they bestow on dress. But it is in vain that they are naturally lovely, and richly attired ; the most they can do, is to share the notice of the men with the Indian girls of their suite, whom they have walking by the sides of their carriages : these blacks are so pretty and delicate, that they are often preferred to their mistresses."

"Fie !" Master Tobias, cried my valet, distorting his features, "no joking : can those tawny skins be looked upon with any pleasure ?" "With any pleasure ?" repeated the muleteer. "Ah, you talk like a man just come from Spain, and who has never been in the habit of seeing brunettes ! Go, go, when you shall have considered them well, you will not think them so disgusting. The gentlemen," added he, "and the officers of Chancery render them more justice. The Viceroy himself makes them extremely welcome ; and his excellency has so much pleasure in their conversation, that the wags say black has become his favourite colour."

I could not help laughing at these words of Master Tobias ; and in order to engage him to

tell me all he knew of the Count de Gelves, who was at that time Viceroy of New Spain, I asked him several questions about that grandee, to which he replied in a manner which made me sensible that the virtues and vices of men in power do not escape the notice of the public. "The Count de Gelves," said the muleteer, "is rather too fond of money, and of those black girls I was talking about. Though he has a hundred thousand ducats a year out of the King's Treasury, and gets a million at least by the presents he receives from the country, and the commerce he carries on with the Phillipine Islands, all this cannot satisfy his appetite for wealth. With the exception of this, he is a perfection of a Viceroy: he knows better than any of his predecessors, how to make the laws and the King's authority respected; and he is so strict that he is called for distinction 'the Butcher of the Brigands.'

"In truth, he well deserves this name," continued Tobias, "for the pains he has taken, and which he still takes every day, to clear the public roads of robbers: for, since he has

been Viceroy, he has caused more murderers and malefactors to be executed, than have been seen punished since the territories of the Great Montezuma changed their master. But we must conceal nothing: if the government of Mexico do so much honour to the Count de Gelves, I believe, between ourselves, that he is a little indebted to Signor Don Juan de Salzedo his principal secretary, who is a man of merit, and in whom he very justly confides for the management of some of the most laborious duties of the vice-royalty."

I interrupted Tobias, to ask him if Don Juan de Salzedo of whom he spoke, had not been employed in the office of the Duke de Uzeda. "Yes, truly," replied he, "and he would be so still, if the Duke de Uzeda had not been in exile since the death of our good King Phillip III.: but immediately after the disgrace of that minister, Don Juan left the Court, to join at Mexico the Duke de Gelves, who was one of his old friends, and to whom he is rather a colleague than a secretary."

I was delighted to find by this news that I should in Mexico be in a land of acquaintance ;

for Don Juan de Salzedo was that same secretary who had made choice of me to be the bearer of important dispatches to Naples for the Duke de Ossuna, and who had the habit of quoting on all occasions passages from Latin authors. I told the muleteer, that I knew Don Juan de Salzedo well, and that I could even boast of having been once among his friends. "Ah, Signor, Gentleman!" exclaimed Toby with great vivacity, "how happy are you in having a friend of so much importance. I know not what brings you to Mexico; but with whatever view you may have come here, be assured of success, since you are acquainted with a man who disposes of all the employments which the Viceroy can bestow, and who, as one may say, is the main spring of government."

When the muleteer Tobias had said thus much of the Count de Gelves and his Secretary, he returned once more to the delights of Mexico. "When," said he, you shall have seen this town and its environs, you will admit that if there be a country on earth which may be compared to a terrestrial Paradise, it

is that. Andalusia and Lombardy, so praised by travelers, do not come near it." And on this Master Tobias gave us a description interesting enough, but so long that it was not concluded when we arrived at Xalapa, the first small town on our road, and in which there is an inn commonly well stocked with provisions.

Chapter Third.

Of the meeting which Don Cherubin had with a friar of the Order of Saint Francis, on entering the town of Xalapa.—Consequence of this meeting.—He sups with the Superior of the monastery.—Description of the monks whom he meets with there.—After supper he plays, wins, and retires at midnight from the monastery.

As we alighted at the door of this inn, there passed by us a friar of the Order of Saint Francis, whom my servant and myself viewed with as much attention as we thought he merited. He was mounted on a good horse, and accompanied by two moorish slaves, who walked at his stirrups. He wore a robe of brown wool turned up and attached to his girdle by a silken cord, exhibiting drawers of fine Holland embroidered at the top, silk stockings, and shoes of Spanish leather with red heels. He had above his frock a hat of Canadian beaver, of which the lining was of

flesh coloured satin. So much grandeur in a mendicant friar, appeared to me a little out of order ; but having learned that in this country it was customary to see such things, I prepared myself for witnessing others of a surprising nature.

I was told that this Cordelier was the Superior of the convent at Xalapa, who probably was going to pay some visit at the extremity of the town. I saluted him with a respectful air, and he returned my salute with a great deal of civility. I had no sooner lost sight than I thought no more of him ; and was far from entertaining an idea that we should sup together that evening, when, about three hours after, there came into the inn a little friar who inquired for the muleteer Tobias. They spoke together a moment in private ; after which coming to me, "Signor," said the muleteer, introducing me to the friar, "here is a little brother who comes to acquit himself of a commission with which his Superior has charged him." "Yes, Signor Cavalier," said the friar, "our most holy father Guardian entreats you will do him the honor to come and sup

with his reverence." I answered the little brother politely, "that the proposition was too agreeable for me not to accept it with pleasure, and that he might assure his most reverend Superior that I would directly prepare myself for visiting his monastery;" as in effect I did, leaving the muleteer and Toston at the inn.

I met at the gate of the convent the father Guardian, who was waiting to conduct me himself to his apartment. "Signor Cavalier," said he, saluting me with a dignified air, "pardon the liberty which one of your countrymen has taken in inviting you to supper; but it is my custom so to act with all the Spanish cavaliers who pass this way on the road to Mexico. It affords me an extreme pleasure to receive them, and to hear from them news of my country, for I am a native of Billao, the capital of Biscay, of which my accent will easily inform you. I am descended from the ancient Counts of Durango, who so signalized themselves in the wars of Fernando against the Moors, and in those of Carlos V. in the low countries."

I judged by this opening, that the monk, in spite of the vows he had made, still preserved the Biscayan character. Accordingly, in order to flatter his vanity, I told him "that by his noble and majestic air, I was, from the first sight, inclined to believe that he must be a man of quality ; that that struck the view at once ; and finally that I found myself highly honoured by the invitation he had sent me."

Upon this the monk who appeared to be a man of about forty and some odd years, introduced me into a large hall decorated with portraits which represented different saints of his order. From thence, having made me traverse a vast court filled with palms and orange trees, he led me into a wing of the building separated from the rest, where he himself resided. To show me all the parts of his dwelling, he made me pass through several rooms hung with cotton tapestry, and full with cupboards furnished with vases of porcelain. This good father then opened a closet where he slept upon a simple woollen mantle, spread out upon a mat. "How then, my reverend father," cried I, "is it on that your reverence

sleeps? I imagined you would have had a softer bed." "You are very good," replied he, with a smile. "Do you not find me much to be pitied? Know that I enjoy upon that pallet, a slumber more profound than that of the inquisitors who sleep on down: admire the effect of habit. I have only," continued he, "my library to show you." At the same time he ushered me into a room quite unfurnished, and in which I perceived about twenty old worm-eaten books on the floor, thrown one upon another, ill bound, covered with dust and cobwebs, and on which there were a guitar, some pieces of music, and a great number of boxes of conserves. At this sight, which appeared to me to have in it something ridiculous, I had no small difficulty in keeping my countenance. I, however, suppressed my inclination to laugh; and I did well, for the reverend father was most perfectly satisfied of the importance of what he was displaying.

When it was time to sit down to table, we went into a saloon in which were three young monks who were to sup with us, and whom he

introduced to me, with an eulogium on each of them. One, as he told me, had a fine voice, the other made good verses, and the third played on all manner of musical instruments. These were his courtiers, and his ordinary table companions when he received strangers. These young friars (what I should be wrong to forget) were dressed in the style of their Superior: they displayed under their large sleeves, doublets of white satin, and the wrists of their fine Holland shirts were ornamented with lace. What is the most remarkable is, that after the fashion of their Guardian, they all laid claim to; distinguished birth, whether they were really entitled to do so, or, being unknown to each other, all thought they might with impunity admit themselves into the order of nobility. To finish the description, they were intelligent men, and their manners rather military than monastick.

I was astonished at the number of dishes with which we were served: there were enough to satisfy a general chapter. All kinds of solid meat, of wild fowl and game composed the first course; and the second did not less

surprise me by the variety of fruits and confections, both dried and liquid, with which the table was covered. I remember, among other things, that finding some conserves of an excellent flavour, I said to the Guardian, "These are admirable conserves. How fortunate are you, father, in having such clever confectioners in your convent!" "These conserves," replied he, "were not made in the house: they are the work of some good nuns, whose convent is in our neighbourhood, and who give themselves the trouble of making them for us."

During supper, all these friars ceased not asking me questions about the Court of Spain. One demanded, of what character was the King, another, if the new minister, the Count Duke of Olivarez, worthily replaced the Dukes of Lerma and Uzeda; and the Guardian in particular, assuming the man of importance, informed himself successfully of all the grantees, with whom he claimed relationship. He boasted of being cousin to the Duke of Ossuna, nephew of the Dukes of Frias and Alberquerque, allied to the Marquesses of Peguafiel and Avila Fuente. In short, he summed up his

genealogy, in which he modestly included all the great names in the Spanish monarchy.

After the repast, some of the party proposed to play at Primero, and this proposal was generally agreed to. Cards were brought; and the first who took them up to deal acquitted himself with a good grace, and in a manner which showed that he was well accustomed to handling them. Here then we were, fairly engaged at play. Fortune at first seemed inclined to favour no one in particular. Sometimes she flattered my companions; but at last declared herself against two of the friars, who, losing their coolness with their money, apostrophized this divinity in a manner not the most guarded for persons of a religious character, and rather adapted for a Tennis-court than a monastery.

The building occupied by the Reverend Father Guardian re-echoed with their exclamations, when I heard it strike midnight. Then addressing myself to the Superior, I begged him to permit me to retire, representing to him that I had a great journey to perform, and that I must be on the road again before

the dawn of Aurora. He was polite enough not to endeavour to detain me longer. I took leave of his noble Reverence, after having thanked him for his gracious reception, and returned to my inn, to the great regret of the two friars, who would willingly have kept me all night, in the hope of regaining some of the pistoles which I had managed to carry off in spite of their ingenuity.

Chapter Four.

Of Don Cherubin's arrival at Mexico, and in what place he went to lodge.—He is charmd with his host's wife, notwithstanding her blackness.

As soon as I returned to my inn I went to bed to get some repose ; but scarcely had sleep taken possession of my senses, ere the hoarse voice of Master Tobias awaked me. I instantly arose ; and as I finished dressing myself, my chocolate was brought me ; after which I mounted my mule, and proceeded on my journey.

The muleteer, an enemy to silence, soon put an end to it. He sang that day ballads made on the wars of Grenada. He then related to us some little tales, the same perhaps which had made the fat friar of the Order of Mercy laugh so much ; but they had not quite so good an effect upon us. On the contrary, they annoyed us so much that we thought the road longer than it really was. I shall, there-

fore, spare the reader the trouble of perusing them, as well as those which he forced upon us on the following days. Let us hasten to get to get to Mexico.

On entering this celebrated town, I asked Tobias, to what point he intended conducting us. "The quarter of the nobility," replied he; "to an inn where gentlemen who come from Spain generally put up, kept by a Spaniard, native of Carmona near Seville, and who is called Master Jerom Juan Morales. Finding himself without property in his own country, he left it to come to Mexico, where he keeps an inn with a young Indian girl whom he has married, and who brings showers of gold into his house." "Beware the Moor," cried Toston, beginning to laugh. "Oh! there is no Moor to fear," replied the muleteer: "Morales, far from resembling your host at Vera Cruz, is by no means jealous, though he has one of the most enticing of Indians for his wife. You will acknowledge when you see her, that there are tawny faces which may be looked on without horror."

"On this footing," said I to the muleteer,

“his tavern ought not to be ill attended.”
“Nor is it so,” replied Tobias. “There are a number of honest folks who go there every day, less to drink than to see the hostess. She receives them with so affable an air that they are enchanted, and the conversations that she has with them, seldom fail to be followed by presents; a thing which is particularly agreeable to Morales, who is delighted at possessing a pretty woman, and seeing people caress her.”

This discourse struck me, and made me wish myself at the inn, that I might have the evidence of my own eyes, not being able to conceive that an Indian woman was capable of fascinating Europeans. Master Tobias, seconding the impatience I evinced for arriving at the house of Morales, redoubled our pace. He took us into Eagle street, in which reside none but gentlemen and the Officers of the Chancery. We alighted at the door of a house which had for a sign a serpent, with these words: *Al Basilico, buena cama.**

* To the Basilisk, good lodging.

“Zooks!” said I to myself, “this sign appears to me droll enough: it seems as if it had been put up to apprise strangers that there is danger in going to lodge at this inn.” But I thought the danger too agreeable to be intimidated at it: notwithstanding all Tobias had said, instead of fearing the Basilisk, I exposed myself without hesitation to her looks.

I sustained them at first with impunity; nay, more! her twany skin displeased me. Nevertheless, I soon became accustomed to it. What do I say? She insensibly fascinated my eyes by her dignified and thoroughly graceful manners; so that after a quarter of an hour’s conversation, I found that hearts are not less in danger with such Indians, than with the most formidable beauties of Madrid. She resembled a little *la Gitanilla*, of whom I spoke in the first volume of these memoirs; I say a little, for the Indian was still more piquant.

It is true that when I saw her, she was dressed out in a fashion which added considerably to her charms. She had a petticoat of Chinese linen thickly covered with

silver, with a flame colored ribbon, the ends of which, ornamented with gold fringe, came down very low both behind and before. She had above this a jacket of the same stuff with large sleeves, embroidered with red silk intermixed with silver, and fastened with gold cords. To this was added a girdle of blue silk enriched with jewels, a collar and bracelets of pearls, with ear-rings of fine brilliants.

It is certain that it was difficult to see her thus without emotion, or rather without being enamoured of her. I thought I should have suffered myself to be caught. At least, for the first day I was entirely taken up with her charms, which persisted throughout the night in presenting themselves to my mind, but my reason, more obstinate than her image, prevented me from yielding to my tender emotions. "Well, friend," said I, to Toston the next day, "what do you think of our hostess? Has she a little reconciled you to the Indians?" "Perfectly," replied he; "Tobias was right in saying that I should change my mind. Last night I fatigued the muscles of my eyes by stretching them in contemplating

the wife of Morales. What a sprightly girl !
I could not be satisfied with looking at her,
and she has, it may be said, changed my taste
from white to black."

Chapter Fifth.

Don Cherubin goes to see the palace of the Viceroy.—He there meets with Don Juan de Salzedo, who recognizes him.—Of the good reception which the Secretary gave him, and of the first conversation they had together, by which Don Cherubin was exceedingly flattered.

I FELT so great a desire to see the town, and in particular the palace of the Viceroy, that to have this satisfaction I went out in the morning with my valet. Morales would absolutely accompany me, to answer, as he said, the questions I might be disposed to ask out of curiosity: and I did not refuse to be conducted by so good a guide. He made me cross the market, the most considerable place in Mexico: one side of this is built in arcades, beneath which are seen shops filled with all kinds of merchandise.

As I was looking about on all sides, I perceived a large house, and asked to whom

it belonged. "It is the palace of the Viceroy," replied my host: "you see it such as Cortez caused to be built on the ruins of Montezuma's." "Is it possible," cried I with astonishment, "that this should be the palace, the magnificence of which I have heard so frequently extolled? There are houses full as good in all the principal towns in Spain. I expected to have seen a more sumptuous building." "You are mistaken," replied Morales, "it is not this palace of which travellers give so splendid a description, but that which was reduced to ashes: it is affirmed that it might pass for the eighth wonder of the world."

"What exaggeration!" again exclaimed I, "I have no objection to believe that the walls were, as these gentlemen say, composed of masonry intermixed with jasper and of a certain other black stone, mottled with red streaks as brilliant as rubies. I also believe that the roof might be inlaid with cedar and cypress; but I cannot put faith in the extraordinary things which they relate of Montezuma, apparently to amuse their readers.

They say, for instance, that there were in his Seraglio more than two thousand women, of whom there were always two hundred pregnant at the same time." "Mercy upon us!" cried Toston, bursting into laughter; "he had then more than King Solomon." "There is nothing in that which ought to astonish you," said Morales, "since Montezuma might have three thousand of them, having the privilege of carrying off the daughters of the principal Indians as often as he pleased."

Thus conversing, we approached the palace. There were at the gate some soldiers, who suffered every one to pass freely. We entered a spacious square court, to cross over to a large staircase which led to the Viceroy's apartments. We followed several cavaliers, who came to that nobleman's levee. We crossed with them three or four richly furnished apartments, and arrived at last at that in which the Count was being dressed by his valets-de-chambre. We all three placed ourselves in a corner, from which we could

see with ease everything which was going forward.

I set myself at first to consider the principal person. He appeared to me about fifty years of age, and possessed the Spanish gravity in a remarkable degree. He had lank hair, black and very thick eyebrows, and a terrible and ferocious air. Nevertheless, I remarked one thing singular enough. While he conversed with some of the gentlemen who came to pay their court to him, he smiled occasionally, and as often as that occurred, he became all at once so different from himself that he appeared as if he had two faces. In short, while he was serious he inspired fear, and when he smiled he appeared perfectly agreeable.

The conversation which he was holding with these gentlemen was interrupted by the arrival of his secretary, in whom I recognized my old friend Don Juan de Salzedo. He held in his hand a large bundle of papers; an old piece of policy in the ministers of Spain, who, in order to appear overloaded with business, always showed themselves

standing on end with waste paper. The Viceroy had no sooner seen, than he came up to him. They both retired to the window, and conversed together nearly a quarter of an hour in private, During this time, I made an observation which agreed very well with what Master Tobias had told me, and which marked very plainly the ascendancy that Salzedo had over the mind of the Count: I know not what was the subject of conversation between them, but it appeared to me that his Excellency listened to his secretary with great complaisance, and approved all that he said.

I was determined not to leave the palace without saluting Don Juan. With this design I placed myself in waiting for him in an ante-chamber, very curious to see what reception he would give me. I doubted his behaving very kindly to a man who would not at Madrid profit by his kindness: nay! I even doubted that he would deign to recognize me. Nevertheless, he had no sooner fixed his eyes on me, than making his way through the crowd, he approached, and

addressing me with a smiling air, "I believe," said he, "I do not deceive myself, you are Don Cherubin de la Ronda." I answered that I was delighted to find he still recollected me. "I have not banished you from my memory," replied he, "*tantum abest!* On your part you ought not to forget that I esteemed you in Spain. I remember that time with pleasure, and I feel at the sight of you all my former friendship revive."

Touched, penetrated with the friendship which he evinced for me, I would have broken out in grateful acknowledgments; but he cut me short, and drawing me aside, "Don Cherubin," continued he with a low voice, "let us have no compliments: you know well that I am a man of sincerity, though I have been all my life at Court. Speak to me with confidence. What brings you to Mexico? I think I can guess: *auri sacra fames*, is it not? Avow it boldly. I am in a state to aid you." I again opened my mouth to thank the secretary for his generosity, and he a second time closed it by say-

ing, "I cannot stop with you any longer. I have some pressing affairs which will detain me the rest of the morning. Come and see me by-and-by, we will then converse at leisure. *Vale.*"

Pronouncing this word of Latin, which he accompanied with a close embrace, he quitted me to resume his labours, leaving me transported with joy at the reception he had just given me. All who had been witnesses of it, looking upon Salzedo as a second Viceroy, envied my happiness, and judged that I must be a Spaniard of distinction, since Signor Don Juan had done me the honour to embrace me. My host complimented me on the subject, and conceived a very high respect for me.

As to Toston, he was in expressible rapture. "Sir," said he, as we returned to the inn, "are you not now pleased with having come to the Indies? What may you not expect from the friendship of Don Juan? You may flatter yourself by his credit" "Hey! what hopes," interrupted I, "my friend, would you have me conceive?

You know that I am rich enough to be contented with what I have." "No, no," replied he, "abundance does no harm. Besides, consider that you have a daughter: you cannot amass too much wealth, if it be for the sake of leaving her a rich heiress."

Chapter Sixth.

Of the visit which Don Cherubin made in the afternoon to Don Juan de Salzedo, and of the second conversation he had with him.—The result of it.—Don Cherubin de la Ronda is received as governor of Don Alexis, son of the Viceroy.—Toston's joy at learning this agreeable news.

I DID not fail to return to the palace of the Viceroy in the afternoon. I was shown the part in which Don Juan de Salzedo was lodged, and went to present myself at the door. I there found a valet-de-chambre, to whom I had no sooner told my name, than he said to me with a respectful air, "Signor, my master is waiting for you in his closet, whither I will conduct you." At the same time, he made me cross five or six rooms at least, one more sumptuous than another; for the Secretary's lodging was as richly furnished as the Viceroy's, and perhaps even more so. There were an infinite number of paintings by the

best masters in Italy, with some of the finest works of Mechoacan feathers and of rabbits' skins.

At last my guide opened the door of a closet, in which was Don Juan, alone, and sitting on a sofa of Chinese silk. As soon as he saw he arose to embrace me, saying, "My dear Don Cherubin, I was waiting for you with impatience, to know what had been the means of bringing you into this country, and to assure you again, that if you be badly off in your affairs, you shall not be so long. In a word, I take upon myself to make your lot happy in Mexico." "I am," I replied, "as sensible as I ought to be of your kindness; but it would be only abusing it if I were to tell you that the desire of enriching myself had brought me to Mexico. No, Sir! though I have but a moderate fortune, I am satisfied with it; and the desire of seeing New Spain has alone induced me to undertake this journey."

"Your sentiments are rather too philosophical," replied Don Juan. "To have but that which is precisely necessary to enable

us to live, is not to be exactly at one's ease, and being confined to a certain expenditure is sad for a man of the world, however little he may be inclined to generosity. Attend to my advice: preserve what you have, and do not refuse the new favours which fortune is preparing to shower upon you through my ministry. An idea has come into my head," added he, "which may be useful to you. I will place you" "Do not propose to me," interrupted I, abruptly enough, "a place in any of your offices." My vivacity made Salzedo laugh. "No, no," replied he, "I know that you do not like a secretary's post. I design you another which will suit you better; that of governor to the young Don Alexis, the only son of the Viceroy. Leave me to manage it for you. I will this day speak to his Excellency, and I dare answer for the success of my application."

As I had accustomed myself to a life of independence, and saw myself about to pass from that into the miserable occupation of a child's governor, I was not dazzled with Salzedo's project. I was even going to tell him

candidly my sentiments on the subject; but what he added kept me silent, and appeared deserving of attention. "Do not imagine," said he, "that I have made you a bad offer. I know as well as yourself that at Madrid, and in the other towns of Spain, the office of governor is no very pleasing one, and that those gentlemen who fill it get barely enough to support themselves, particularly when they have the folly to dress themselves splendidly. God forbid that I should be tempted to procure you a similar establishment here! That would be rendering you no great service. But deign to hear me out. I design in placing you over the conduct of Don Alexis, to establish you on another footing at the Viceroy's. I will have them look upon you as a Mentor, and treat you with distinction. In a word, you will there be considered, beloved, respected; and you will have a considerable salary, without counting the profits which you will obtain every year through my means."

The Secretary Salzedo said so much to me about it, that he prevailed on me. "I can

no longer," said I, "hold out against such flattering promises; and what I am pleased with beyond all the rest is to see you take so great an interest in my fortune. The only question is now whether I shall have the good luck to please his Excellency." "That is a point on which I am under no apprehension," interrupted Don Juan. "The description that I shall give him of you, will not fail to prepossess him in your favour, and your appearance will spoil nothing. Return," added he, "return hither to-morrow, and I will present you to his Excellency after his dinner."

Such was the second conversation I had with my friend Salzedo, who said to me the following day as soon as I approached him, "Your business is done; you are governor of Don Alexis. The Count de Gelves assigns you apartments in the palace, with twelve hundred pistoles a year for your salary. Besides this, when you desire to go out to pay a visit, or for exercise, there will be always two lacqueys, and a carriage at your disposal."

"Truly, Signor Don Juan," cried I, "I am confounded by the marks of friendship

which you are giving me." "Oh! that is not all," replied he: "I should not be satisfied with myself if I confined my desire of obliging you to that. I calculate on adding every year to your salary two thousand crowns at least, which will result from the commerce carried on by his Excellency and myself, both with Spain and the Phillipine Islands, and in which I will give you a share." "Ah! this is too much," said I. "What have I done to merit so many favours, and how can I repay them?" "By esteeming me as much as I esteem you," replied he; "that is all I exact from your gratitude. But," added he, changing the discourse, "let us go and see my lord. He is in his closet, where he must by this time have finished his siesta. Let us seize the opportunity.

He conducted me directly as far as the door, and desired me to wait there a moment. He then went alone into the closet, where he remained nearly a quarter of an hour; then returning to me, he took me by the hand, and introduced me. The Viceroy ran me over with his eye from head to foot, and the

coup d'œil was favourable. "I think," said his Excellency, with an air of condescension, "that Salzedo has not gone beyond the truth with me: you have a countenance which confirms the eulogium he has passed upon you. I confide Don Alexis to your care, confident that he cannot be in better hands. In regard to your interests, Don Juan has of course made known to you my intentions, and on what footing I design you to be in my establishment." I replied, "that I would make it my whole study to render myself worthy of the employment with which he has disposed to honour me."

I retired upon this with my Mécœnas, who carried me to Don Alexis, whom we found in his apartment composing a theme under the eyes of his tutor, an old Gallician priest, who had, as they say, burned the broom. "My young lord," said Salzedo to Don Alexis, 'here is the governor whom his Excellency, has chosen to introduce you into the world, and form your mind to virtue. I can assure you that you will be satisfied with him, and I hope he will likewise be so with you.' Don

Alexis only replied by staring at me with open eyes. I addressed him in order to induce him to speak, and to enable me to judge of his mind, which appeared absorbed in the matter in which he was engaged. While I conversed with him, his preceptor, who was a man bristling with Latin, quoted passages from Virgil and Horace, and Don Juan, who desired nothing better than to do the same thing, overwhelmed us in his turn with Latin sentences. After they had thus amused themselves to their hearts' content, Salzedo said, "Signor Don Cherubin, return to your inn, and prepare yourself for coming hither to-morrow to take possession of your new post. You will find here a lodging, befitting the place which you are to hold."

I immediately made my bow to the company, and returned to the Basilisk, where I found my valet waiting with the utmost impatience to learn the success of my visit. "Toston," said I, "we must go and reside at the Viceroy's palace. I am governor to Don Alexis." I had no sooner pronounced these words, than, abandoning himself to an im-

moderate joy, he began to jump about like a madman. When he had tired himself, he stopped to take breath. "Here we are then," said he, "thank God, in train, you of enlarging your fortune, and I of commencing mine; for I calculate that one will not go without the other." "You are right, friend," replied I: "if I acquire riches in this country, I assure you that I will give you a share of them." This promise revived in Toston the humour of jumping.

While he was cutting fresh capers, Morales, who came in, demanded why he was so exceedingly rejoiced. I told him the cause, and gave him a circumstantial detail of the advantages attached to my employment. My host was dazzled by this, and, already looking on me as a great and powerful lord, begged me to grant him my protection. The most amusing part of the business was, that I accorded it to him with a serious air, making him sincere protestations of serving him whenever I should find the opportunity. On the following day, after having charged Toston with the care of having my effects

conveyed to my new dwelling, I bid adieu to my beautiful hostess, who appeared to me rather mortified at our separation, though she had no great reason to be so, as she only lost in me a man who refused to sacrifice to her charms.

Chapter Seventh.

Don Cherubin, governor of Don Alexis de Gelves, only son of the Viceroy, pays a visit to the Vice-Queen.—His conversation with the tutor of Don Alexis.—Character of the latter.

I RETURNED to the palace, where I went in the first place to see Salzedo, who, to instal me in my new post, took me himself to my lodging, which consisted of three small rooms on the same floor, well furnished, with a wardrobe where there was a bed for my valet. "You will not be badly lodged, as you perceive," said Don Juan; and you can dine in private with Doctor Gaspard de Aldagna, preceptor of Don Alexis, if that be more agreeable to you than to be served alone in your apartment. This doctor is a very honest ecclesiastic, of a very good disposition, who does not want for wit, and who talks Latin admirably." I replied, "that I should be happy to dine and sup with such a col-

league, and the arrangement was made accordingly."

The first step which I considered I ought to take in the discharge of my duty, was that of paying my respects to the Vice-Queen. Salzedo conducted me to her. I expected a reception full of haughtiness, imagining that the Countess was a proud woman, and intoxicated with her grandeur. Not at all: the good lady, on the contrary, received me graciously, and the more particularly so as Don Juan had previously made her a magnificent eulogium on my merit. She asked me several questions, in order to judge by my replies, if my understanding had not been too highly represented to her; but happily for me, she was so well satisfied with our conversation, that she said to Salzedo in my presence, "I owe you thanks, Don Juan, for having made such a choice. This gentleman appears to me qualified for bringing up a young nobleman. Such is the person required for forming the manners of my son, who, I confess, has but little disposition for becoming a perfect cavalier." "That will come in time, madam,"

said Don Juan: "Don Alexis has a slow genius, which will develope itself by degrees with the aid of a good governor."

After having had this conversation with the Vice-Queen, I went to see my pupil, with whom I had one which afflicted me. I found I had to do with a scholar who was preparing me abundance of employment, with a most heavy subject, with an automaton. I expressed my chagrin on this subject to Doctor Gaspard, who, I thought, ought not to have had less than myself: however, he appeared to have made up his mind upon it. "I agree with you," replied he, "that it is disagreeable both for you and for me to have an imbecile scholar; for Don Alexis is in reality such. He is already in his fifteenth year, and he is not capable of making the most simple version, though for eighteen months that I have been his master, I have toiled myself to death to teach him the Latin language. Sometimes, tired of sowing upon sand, I have lost patience, and begged my dismissal from the Count; but he would never grant it to me. 'Signor Doctor,' he always said,

‘pray do not abandon my son. I know very well it is not your fault, if hitherto he has not profited by your lessons. No matter! continue. By hearing the same things often repeated, he may retain some, and that will be enough for him, for I do not pretend to make him a man of learning.’ To obey his Excellency, therefore,” pursued the Doctor, “I remain, and still go on in my old way. I give my little lord exercises and versions, which he gets through as it pleases God.

“In the meantime I live well in the palace. My salary, which is tolerably good, is regularly paid, and I shall perhaps in the end get hold of some good benefice; for when in the service of the great, one is not always ill recompensed. Imitate me, therefore, Don Cherubin. Hey! Why take things so much to heart? Conduct young Alexis into the world; reprove him when he is guilty of any reprehensible action, or says any foolish thing; and laugh at the rest. If our pupil be naturally a stupid animal, we cannot help it. Look at his other masters: are they more forward than ourselves? No, truly. One cannot teach

him music, nor the other the principles of dancing, though they have been fifteen months instructing him. Do you think that grieves them? Not at all. They give the fool their lessons at all hazards, and make a milch cow of him."

It was thus that the Gallician exhorted me to console myself for the stupidity of Don Alexis, and I conceived that he was in the right. I began, therefore, to discharge my duty as best I could. I set myself before all things to gain the friendship of my little man by mild and insinuating behaviour, and in a few days succeeded in my endeavour. It is true that I only conversed with him in a manner more calculated to divert than to instruct him, for fear of disgusting him by dogmatizing.

Chapter Eighth.

He goes out with his pupil to the field called the Alameda, which is the principal promenade at Mexico.—Of the observations he made there, and the extreme astonishment they caused him.—Tragical event of which he is witness.

I PASSED three days in getting myself properly settled, without going out of the palace ; but on the fourth, towards five o'clock in the evening, I got into a magnificent carriage with Don Alexis, and we drove towards the field of the Alameda, as I felt a great pleasure in seeing it, after the description that Master Tobias the muleteer had given me of it.

This field is of vast extent. It contains a great number of alleys bordered with trees, where one may walk without being incommoded by the heat of the sun. The Zocodover of Toledo, and even the Prado of Madrid, do not come near this promenade,

which presents an enchanting spectacle to the eye. One may see there as many as two thousand carriages, filled with gentlemen, citizens and people of all conditions. The gentry, those principally who are said to be descendants of the Captains of Cortez, have for the most part superb equipages, and are followed by Moorish slaves in rich liveries, with silk stockings, and wearing roses of precious stones on their shoes. Besides this, these slaves are all armed; so that their proud masters may boast of having guards like kings.

The ladies do not ride with less pomp than the gentlemen. By the sides of their carriages they arrange their suites, which are composed of those genteel black girls whom I formerly mentioned, and who are so adorned that they frequently rob their mistresses of the glances of the men. These, notwithstanding, omit nothing to render themselves charming. All that can be done by art is exerted in their dress, and precious stones are employed in it in the most coquetish taste of America.

On whatever side I turned my eyes, I saw nothing but gold and diamonds; which produced an effect so advantageous for the women, that they all appeared to me, one more handsome than another. "Where am I then?" said I to myself. "At seeing so many ravishing objects, little is wanting to believe one's self in Mahomet's paradise."

I was, in fact, dazzled by the brilliant beauty which offered itself to my view on all sides; but no one of these ladies made more impression on me than another: for the moment that I remarked one who struck me, there passed another who attracted my attention to herself; so that I beheld with impunity a number of faces, which I should have found very formidable had I seen them singly.

The pleasure which I felt in looking to the right and left was disturbed by an event which is but too common in this promenade, where jealous lovers, who cannot endure that their rivals should speak to their mistresses, nor even approach them, too closely, often dart upon them, sword or poniard in hand.

I saw at two or three hundred yards from me, at the side of a carriage, two cavaliers who were fighting with so much fury that one of them speedily fell to the ground. In a moment twenty swords were drawn, some to avenge the vanquished, and others to defend the victor. The friends of the latter were the strongest: they delivered him from the hands of his enemies, and carried him to the nearest church, where he remained in safety, the immunity of churches being inviolable in this country. Whatever crime a man may have committed, if he be fortunate enough to save himself in one of these sacred asylums, he escapes the rigour of the laws, without even the Viceroy himself having the power to force him from it, to deliver him up to justice.

After having been witness of this melancholy adventure, I continued to ride about, and view the ladies, until the night concealed them from my view. I then returned with my pupil to the palace, my mind much occupied with what I had seen, and unable

sufficiently to admire the magnificence of the inhabitants of Mexico. When I drew a parallel between them and those of Madrid, the latter did not gain by the comparison.

Chapter Ninth.

How the genius of Don Alexis was brightened.—The conversation which Don Cherubin had with his valet.—What he learns from his valet astonishes him.—Prudent advice which he gives to Toston.—The latter is inclined to profit by it.

IF I had a scholar who was stupid, in recompense he was gentle and obedient. If he did not well that which I wished him, he at least tried to do it: his good will supplied by degrees the talents of which he was deficient. At the end of nine or ten months (what perfectly astonished myself) he appeared quite another thing in the eyes of the Count, his father, who complimented me upon his improvement, as did also the Countess. "*Macte animo*," said my friend, the secretary, to me, one morning; "they are well satisfied with you. *Perge*, and be not in pain for the rest: that is my business."

Flattered with so fortunate a commence-

ment, I attended more closely than I had hitherto done to my pupil: and each of his other masters seconding my endeavours, we made of him in less than two years, a cavalier as good as most others. He knew how to present himself with a good grace, and to sustain a conversation in the style of the best company at Mexico. It was an absolute metamorphosis and did me peculiar honour, as also Doctor Gaspard, who by dint of repeating the same things over and over to Don Alexis, had at last succeeded in putting a little Latin into his head.

We were all proud of the happy result of our labours. Nevertheless, whatever cause we might have to applaud ourselves for having polished our scholar, I know not whether Toston had not a greater share in the work than we. He at least contributed to it as much: a fact which he revealed to me one day, when I was boasting in his presence of having made my pupil a smart youth. "Sir," said he, with an arch smile, "you undoubtedly deserve praise, and I should be very much in the wrong were I to refuse it to you; but per-

mit me, if you please, to say that you and Doctor Gaspard ought not to take all the merit to yourselves, since I have laboured at the same work; or rather know that it is I who have brightened this young lord: or indeed, if you will, it is a miracle of love."

"Speak to me," said I, "more clearly; explain the whole." "That," said he "is what I am about to do in a few words. There is, among the attendants of the Vice-Queen, a Creole of about seventeen, who is possessed of wit and beauty. This little person is the author of the change of which you attribute to yourselves the glory."

"What sayest thou, Toston?" cried I, "thou announcest to me a piece of information which astonishes me exceedingly. How did Don Alexis become enamoured of this Creole? Has he made known to her his sentiments? How, in short, does he stand with her?" "At the tail of the ballad," replied my valet. "I cannot get over my surprise," replied I, hastily; "recount to me, I pray thee, the means by which this intrigue has been carried on." "I will faithfully de-

tail it," replied he; "do me the honour to attend.

"You know that I pay assiduous court to Don Alexis, and that we live together very familiarly. I am not less his valet-de-chambre than yours, and possess his confidence. Blandina, the most lovely of the attendants of the Vice-Queen, had charmed him. He made me the confident of his love, and prayed me to exert myself to procure him private interviews with this nymph; which I effect at night so happily, that no one has the least suspicion of it. This is what I had to inform you. Judge now whether these nocturnal interviews, or your lessons, have brightened up the wits of our young lord."

Thus spoke the officious and secret agent of Don Alexis; after which I said, shaking my head, "Master Toston, if thou thinkest to have my applause for having thus contributed to the change in my pupil, thou art in error. God forbid that I should approve the culpable method thou hast used to rid him of his imbecility! better he had still continued in it. Besides, art thou well assured

that thou wilt not repent of having been so obliging? Thou knowest the severity of the Viceroy. He will not perhaps feel much indebted to thee, for such services rendered to his son, if, unfortunately for thee, they should come to his knowledge; nor may the Countess think it altogether right that thou shouldst corrupt her maids. In short, my friend, thou art playing a game which may get thyself shut up in a dungeon; and me turned out of doors, to teach me to chuse valets of a less vicious character. See to what thou exposest us both."

Toston allowed me to talk as long as I liked without interrupting me; but instead of being moved at what I said to him, he turned a deaf ear to my discourse; and when I had concluded, answered me, smiling, in the following terms: "Nothing is more reasonable than what you have been representing to me. You are a wise and prudent man. But you know not all. The Countess is not ignorant of what is going forward. I will tell you,—it is by her orders that I conduct this intrigue."

“What do I hear!” cried I. “Dost thou not deceive me? May I place faith in thy report?” “Doubt it not, Sir,” said he; “it is a certain fact. If a lie sometimes escape me, at least it is not with you. The Vice-Queen,” he continued, “having one day sent for me, said to me in private, ‘My friend, I would employ thy ministry; but be discreet. Don Alexis has no longer the air of stupidity which he formerly had. His mind is brightening every day. There wants nothing to finish him but a little female conversation. An idea has come into my head. Do thou enable him to make a secret acquaintance with Blandina, who is the prettiest and most lively of my attendants. She will not fail to inspire him with love, and that love will produce good effects: it will perfect the cavalier, and prevent him from attaching himself, like his father, to the blacks; a detestable taste, from which I would preserve my son, and for which I cannot pardon Spaniards. For the rest,’ added the Countess, assuming an air of reserve, ‘if I charge thee with this commission, which per-

haps appears a little delicate, it is because I am persuaded that Blandina runs no risk: she has prudence, and my son is too timid to alarm her virtue.'

"I would not tell the Countess," continued Toston, "that I had been beforehand with her, and that the parties already, through my interference, lived in the softest union. To give her the honor of it, I promised to execute her project, as if it had not been already done. This is what you were ignorant of," continued he: "now you need no longer tremble either for yourself or me." "That does not set me at ease," said I; "if the Viceroy come to know that thou contrivest tête-à-têtes between his son and Blandina, a melancholy salary may probably be the reward of thy services; and the Vice-Queen, although thy accomplice, will leave thee in the net instead of drawing thee out of it. Make thou thy own reflections on the matter."

The advice appeared of importance to my gentleman intriguer, who, in order to profit by it, resolved to take his measures so well, that he might continue with impunity to serve

the passion of Don Alexis ; which, in effect, he did with so much good fortune and address, that during two entire years no person in the palace had any knowledge of it.

Chapter Cxvth.

Don Cherubin de la Ronda rolls in gold and silver.—He expends a great portion in parties of pleasure with ladies of his acquaintance.—He goes to see a play.—What kind of piece this was, and the impression it made upon him.

ON the other hand, the Count de Gelves, delighted with the polished exterior of his son, and imagining that it was my work, did not know how to repay me. He did not content himself, avaricious as he was, with having my salary exactly paid, but loaded me with presents. Add to this, that Salzedo was very punctual in keeping the promises he had made to me ; so that I began to roll in gold. Had I had ever so little disposition to avarice, I should unquestionably have become a miser in so lucrative a post : but this was not my vice ; and far from hoarding up, I spent my money as I gained it.

I often made parties of pleasure, and gave

entertainments to ladies with whom I was acquainted. I used to go to their houses to pass the afternoon in play; which is carried on so freely in Mexico, that it is the principal occupation of the women. I sometimes took them to the Theatre, the actors of which were supported by the Viceroy, or, more properly speaking, by the public; for his Excellency allowed them such a trifling pension that they could not subsist on it. Their company, which was composed of Mexicans, was tolerably good. There were among them five or six excellent actors, a sufficient eulogium of a comic troop, which commonly has not three who deserve to be applauded.

One day, when these actors represented for the third time a new play which had been very well received, I went to see it with Don Juan and two ladies of his acquaintance. It was the production of a celebrated author. It was much praised about town, and was entitled *La Nobia Sonsacada*.* I suffered myself to be carried thither out of complaisance, or

* The Seduced Bride.

rather in spite of myself, not feeling much curiosity to see a piece which promised me more pain than pleasure. The connection which the title had with my own adventure frightened me, and I doubted not that there was something in the comedy, of a nature to cause a laugh at my expense.

Nevertheless, though struck with so reasonable a fear, I mixed among the spectators, resolved, since my story was not known, to put the best face on the matter, and even applaud the first strokes of raillery which I should hear uttered against unlucky husbands ; but I was not under the necessity of going so far as that, since, though it was a comedy, there was not a single word throughout calculated to excite laughter. The author was not one of those who take Plautus and Terence for their models ; but on the contrary, sworn enemy to mirth and pleasantry, he admitted only sighs and tears in his pieces, which he farcified with sentences and tirades of morality in rhyme, to the infinite amusement of the gentlemen Americans.

But if my ears were not struck with any raillery which I could apply to myself, I was not therefore let off at a cheaper rate. As the business of this piece consisted in carrying off a wife, the rape of Donna Paula, which I was beginning to forget, came in full force to my recollection, and caused me inconceivable pain. In vain I constrained myself, and exerted every effort to overcome the secret emotions which agitated me; it was impossible to conceal them from Salzedo, who, remarking the alteration of my countenance, said to me with a smile, "Oh! oh! it seems to me that this piece interests you." "It is impossible to do so more," replied I, reddening: "the author possesses perfectly the art of touching the passions. But it must be admitted that these are admirable actors. I am principally pleased with him who plays the husband. He represents so naturally a tender spouse from whom a wife has been carried off, that I find his grief communicate to myself. I put myself in his place: I imagine that I have lost a beloved wife: I feel as much as he."

My answer excited the laughter of the secretary and the two ladies who were with us. They rallied me on the excess of my sensibility. I suffered them to make themselves merry at my expense; choosing much rather to sustain their pleasantries, than to make them acquainted with what I was extremely happy they should remain in ignorance of. Having recovered from the disorder into which my spirits had been thrown, I said to Salzedo when the play was ended, "The husband, instead of abandoning himself to despair, as I at first thought he was inclined to do, acts wisely in resolving to console himself." "True, he does well," replied Don Juan, "since the wife appears to have acted in concert with her ravisher. If I had the misfortune to find myself in similar circumstances, I would not, I assure you, be fool enough to let myself die of grief for having lost a woman who had betrayed me."

As, upon this subject, I had no other opinion than Salzedo's, the impression which "La Nobia Sonsacada" made on my mind,

was speedily effaced ; or rather I profited by this piece, in espousing the sentiments of the husband, and by renewing my resolution of forgetting Donna Paula.

Chapter Eleventh.

Of the greatest embarrassment in which Don Cherubin ever found himself.—In what manner he got out of it.—Salzedo proposes to him his daughter in marriage.—He refuses her.—Surprise of his friend.

ABOUT this time, Salzedo, who had been a widower some years, took home his daughter Blanca from the convent in which he had placed her on his arrival at Mexico. She possessed a small lively person, very pretty, and a mind in which was discernible sufficient sense to afford the promise of her having a great deal at a future day.

To contribute on my part towards forming her, or rather to pay my court to her father, who begged me to see and talk to her as often as possible, I scarcely let a day pass without having some conversation with her, in which I gave her moral lessons, enlivened by discourse as sprightly as was necessary not to make them tiresome.

All this went on the best in the world ; but there happened an accident which spoiled all : the preceptor could not help falling in love with his pupil. No sooner was I sensible of my sentiments, than I reproached myself with them. "What do you propose to do ?" said I to myself. "To show your gratitude for Don Juan's bounties, would you seduce his daughter ?" I was not satisfied with reproaching myself for this passion, I resolved to combat it ; which, however, I did at first without effect, for, continuing still to see Blanca, the sight of her always overpowered my reflections ; so that I was under the necessity of applying to the efficacious remedy recommended by Ovid upon such occasions, that is to say, absence.

I ceased therefore to pay such frequent visits to the young lady, and when I did go to see her, had not more than a moment's conference with her. Piqued at the change which she perceived in my behaviour, she said to me one day, "You grow tired of me, I see very plainly ; you look upon me as a child who is not capable of amusing you." I knew not

what answer to make, not having resolution to tell her the reason for which I shunned her, for fear of becoming more culpable in endeavouring to justify myself.

At last Blanca, perceiving that I every day took more and more pains to avoid her, complained of it to her father, who did not fail to reproach me for it. "How is this," said he, "Blanca complains of her master. You grow tired, she says, of instructing her. Is it possible that, in proportion as she grows up, you find her company less agreeable? This surprises me." I replied in the same tone, "That would indeed be a surprising consequence, but may I not on the other hand discontinue my lessons, because her company is beginning to grow too dangerous? "Would to heaven," replied Don Juan, "that it were for that reason that you abandoned your scholar!" "And what other reason," returned I, "could make me abandon the charms of Donna Blanca? Yes, Signor, if I fly her, it is because I find it impossible to view her with impunity. After the avowal which I have just made you, I believe you will applaud the

care which I take to combat the birth of an affection, which might by augmenting, cause me to lose your friendship."

Salzedo smiled at these words, which were, in my opinion, calculated to make him assume a more serious air. "Don Cherubin," said he, "you show too much diffidence of your own virtue: repose more confidence in it. Continue your lessons; see my daughter every day: I believe you incapable of abusing the liberty I give you of conversing with her; I have no uneasiness on the subject. I shall say no more about it."

This reticence plunged me in a profound reverie. "What could have been the thoughts of Don Juan?" said I, "when he had quitted me. Would he be inclined to have me marry Blanca? Such, it appears to me, must be the meaning of the last words he uttered. Could his friendship for me be carried so far, as to afford me such a testimony? But what folly in me to think of such a thing! This secretary is too rich not to have views more elevated by far; and his only daughter is not made for a man like me. But whatever may

be his intention in requiring me to revisit Blanca, he must be satisfied."

I determined then to obey him, fully resolving to keep myself on my guard against the charms of his daughter; a thing more easy to say than to perform, for every day she became more formidable. As she knew how very highly I was esteemed by her father, she received me in a manner so familiar and obliging, that I had to fear no less the marks of friendship she bestowed upon me, than the power of her eyes. I was in a situation quite embarrassing.

To add to my trouble, Don Juan said to me one day, "It is now time to communicate to you a design I have conceived. Learn the extent of my regard for you. My daughter is now *matura viro*, and it is you whom I have chosen for my son-in-law."

I could not hear this without being disconcerted. Salzedo put a wrong interpretation on the embarrassment I evinced. He thought it was caused by joy; and in this error continued, "Yes, my dear Don Cherubin, I feel an extreme pleasure in allying your lot with

that of my daughter, to bind you more firmly to myself." He even accompanied these words with an embrace which pierced my heart. In the chagrin I felt at this moment in not being at liberty to become his son-in-law, I uttered a melancholy sigh, which he interpreted no better than he had my agitation: he imagined that Blanca was not to my mind, and that I felt a repugnance to espouse her. He was highly piqued at this; and casting upon me a look in which anger was depicted, said to me, in a tone of irony, "Signor Bachelor, I am extremely sorry that my daughter has not found the way to your heart: you love only beauties old enough to be grandmothers; you should have to please you a Donna Louisa de Padilla."

At this piece of raillery I looked in Don Juan's face with such a mortified air, that he, judging something extraordinary was passing in my mind, began to consider me with the most serious attention. "Ah, Signor," said I, "do you imagine that I know not the value of the honour you would confer on me? Do me more justice. The possession of Donna

Blanca would have a thousand charms for me ; but, alas ! that is forbidden to me : I am married." "You," cried Salzedo with surprise, "you married ! Why did you not tell me so ?" "If I made a mystery of my marriage with you," I replied, "it was, because in speaking of it I should have been obliged to inform you of the misfortune which followed close upon it, and which I would have buried in eternal silence." "Conceal not this misfortune from me," returned he ; "perhaps I may assist you in repairing it." "I must then reveal the secret," replied I ; "pardon me for not having done it before." I then confided to him the whole story, and remarked as I related it, that he participated in my affliction.

"Don Cherubin," said he, when I had finished my recital, "I am sensibly affected with what you have told me. I am no longer surprised at your appearing troubled at the representation of 'La Nobia Sonsacada.'" This piece no doubt revived the recollection of your misfortune ; but let reason banish for ever from your mind these gloomy images.

With regard to my daughter, we will say no more about her; ceasing to see her, you will shortly cease to love her. I would gladly have been your father-in-law; and I should doubtless have been so, had not fortune thrown this insuperable obstacle in the way. Let us then content ourselves with being united in bonds of the most tender friendship."

Chapter Cmlfth.

History of Don Andre de Alvarade and Donna Cynthia de la Carrera.—Don Cherrabin's advice.—Don Andre approves and resolves to follow it.

THE easier to forget Salzedo's daughter, I began to pay court more strongly than ever to the most lovely of the Mexican ladies. I also saw a number of young gentlemen with whom I every day engaged in parties of pleasure. Among others, I formed a close intimacy with Don Andre de Alvarade, great grandson to the famous Alvarade, of whom such honorable mention is made in the history of the conquest of Mexico.

Having one day gone to visit him, I found him in his room extended on a sofa of Chinese silk, and plunged in a reverie so profound, that I entered without his perceiving me. I remained some minutes before him, while he was so occupied with his thoughts, that he was insensible of my presence ; and imagining

himself alone, pronounced aloud, "Yes, I believe that this creature will drive me mad." He then started from his reverie, and, seeing me, burst out laughing. "Ah! my dear friend," cried he, "are you there? You found me absorbed in my reflections; and, since you have heard me, I will no longer make a mystery with you of the state in which I find myself. I love, or rather I adore a lady who is driving me to despair."

"Hey!" cried I, "who is this cruel, this ungrateful creature, of whom you complain?" "It is," replied he, "Donna Cynthia de la Carrera, daughter of Don Joaquin de la Carrera, Councillor of the Chancery. You have never seen her, and she is a new acquaintance, whom I have made to my misfortune. She is a lady of ravishing beauty; but the hope of pleasing her is denied me. She is courted by Don Bernardo de Orosco, and Don Julian de Martara, who are two young noblemen of great merit."

"I understand you," replied I; "these concurrences give you pain; you are alarmed at their courtship." "Very little replied he;

“formidable as they are, I fear them less than the strange character of Cynthia : she is so proud and so disdainful, that she does not imagine there is on earth a man worthy of her attention. She becomes like a fury when any one speaks to her of love. Don Joaquin, her father, who is desirous enough of marrying her, but who will not constrain her inclination, finds her so opposed to his intention, that he dares no longer press her to take a husband. Would you believe it, in the apartment of this cruel creature everything announces that she is an enemy to love? Nothing is to be seen there but the portraits of women, over whom this god could never triumph. On one side, you see Daphne flying from the embraces of Apollo ; on the other, Arethusa, who chuses rather to be changed into a fountain than yield to the love of Alpheus. In a word, all the paintings which there meet the eye evince that she despises men.”

“You are giving me the description of a most extraordinary lady,” said I, considerably surprised to find that there was any such in Mexico, where the women are naturally

less cruel than in any part of the world. "She has then it seems, received very ill, the declaration of your passion?" "I have not yet declared it to her," replied he; "and, between ourselves, I know not what to do about it. If I break silence, she will close my mouth with some haughty answer, and if I hold my tongue, my fate will still remain uncertain."

"You see my embarrassment," pursued Don Andre; "if you were in my place, what course would you pursue?" "An extreme," replied I: "instead of burning incense to the idol, and nourishing her pride by flattery and attentions, I would oppose it by a feigned indifference; I would employ disdain for disdain; I would go beyond her in the aversion she manifests for all tender engagements. It is thus I would act with a person of such a singular character. What say you to my way of thinking? You perhaps consider it extravagant." "Not at all," replied Don Andre; "I approve of it highly; and, to convince you of it, I am determined to act this part with Cynthia. I think I shall not acquit

myself ill, though I burn with the greatest ardour towards her. We shall see what this artifice will produce. I will go and see her to day, and will give you an account to-morrow of what shall pass between us."

We here separated, and early the following day Alvarade called upon me. I was no less impatient to hear the progress he had made, than he to recount it to me. "Don Cherubin," said he, gaily, "I shall be very much deceived if our stratagem do not succeed. Yesterday, when I went to Cynthia's, as I was going into the house I met her servant Laura, whom I have already engaged in my interest. I made her the confident of our project, telling her the plan I intended to pursue with her mistress; and nothing it appeared to her could have been more ingeniously conceived. Laura," continued he, "was not content with only applauding my design, but promised to second it; and I rely a great deal upon this promise, for she is a girl of talent, and capable of serving me." "But," said I, "did you not see Cynthia? Did you not speak to her?" "Pardon me," said he,

“I went to her apartment, where I found her with some ladies of her acquaintance, and Don Bernardo de Orosco. We began talking of marriage. Don Bernardo extolled the advantages of it, and made the happiness of life consist in the union of two persons bound by mutual affection. Don Joaquin’s daughter, on the contrary, maintained that there was no condition more wretched than that of two persons bound together by the yoke of Hymen. ‘I am of the lady’s opinion,’ cried I, ‘on that subject. I think that no state can be more deplorable than that of married people; and have, therefore, ever since I attained the age of reason, looked with horror upon wedlock, as also upon love; for it is this dangerous passion which commonly conducts to marriage.’

“All the company burst out laughing at hearing me speak thus. ‘You are then,’ said one lady, ‘an enemy to our sex, Don Andre?’ ‘No, madam,’ replied I, ‘do not make me more culpable than I am. God forbid that I should be a woman hater. I respect and honour them infinitely; but that is all they

are to expect from me. I will neither love them, nor be loved by them.' 'How, then,' said Don Joaquin's daughter, 'if any beautiful lady should cast her eyes on you, she might run the risk of being repaid with ingratitude.' 'Yes, madam,' replied I, 'doubtless; she would have the mortification of loving by herself, were she as amiable as you.' The ladies redoubled their laughter at these words, which I pronounced with a very serious air, and with which Cynthia appeared to me to be a little moved. 'Ladies,' returned she, addressing her friends, 'you see that Don Alvarade will not deceive you, since he declares his sentiments so plainly.' 'But, Don Andre,' cried a lady, 'be consistent with yourself: you have been seen to give entertainments to ladies: which seems to imply that you are not so insensible as you would have us believe to their attractions.' 'That does not,' replied I, 'prove that I love them; it only shows that I am gallant, as every gentlemen ought to be. I do not deny myself their company; but I view the ladies without suffering my affections to

be engaged to them, and without feeling any desire to please them.'

'This is what passed yesterday with Don Joaquin's daughter," continued Don Andre Alvarade; "and to tell you my opinion of it, I thought I remarked in Cynthia's eyes a secret anger at meeting a man who seemed to bid defiance to her empire. I do not know after all whether I may not deceive myself in thinking so. I would not swear it; and the indifference which I affect out of pride, will perhaps answer no other purpose than that of making her despise me the more." "No, my friend," said I; "I rather conclude, that to avenge her wounded vanity, she will be the more desirous of fixing you in her chains."

Chapter Thirteenth.

*Continuation of the story of Don Andre Alvarade and Donna Cynthia De la Carrera.
—Final success of Don Cherubin's advice.
—He is thanked for it by Don Andre.*

IN effect, on the very same day, Don Andre having met Laura at a house appointed, he learned that her mistress had fallen into the snare. "Yes, Signor Don Andre," said the waiting maid, "you have raised against you the pride of the haughty Cynthia. She says she cannot pardon your insensibility; and I warn you that she is resolved to spare no pains to triumph over it. She has not slept all night; and has done nothing but groan and sigh with rage, at your having braved the power of her eyes." "But, madam," said I, "what cause have you to complain of Don Andre? he is not more blameable in being insensible to the charms of ladies, than you in despising the most accomplished cavaliers." "Do not take his part, Laura," replied she. "Seek not to

excuse him. I detest him; and I shall never feel satisfied till I see this savage dying at my feet. I would, if I possessed it, give all the wealth in the world to have that pleasure."

"You of course judge by what I have told you," said the maid, "that Don Joaquin's daughter is preparing to set every engine at work to inflame you. Take your measures accordingly, and be persuaded that you have everything to hope for in continuing the deception you have begun. Adieu, Signor Don Andre," continued she, "I am going back to my mistress. Return here at six o'clock, and it is probable I may have some information for you." Don Andre, having returned at the appointed time, accordingly met the maid. "Keep yourself on your guard," said she, "my mistress designs to attack you with her strongest weapons: as it is now Carnival time, she designs to give a *Sarao** to-mor-

* This is an assembly which takes place in the Carnival time. It is composed of young people of both sexes, who are in disguise, but without masks. A woman who has in her hand a basket of silk sashes of different colours, presents one to each lady as she enters the *Sarao*

row evening, in which it will be so contrived, that you will both wear sashes of the same colour. She makes tolerably sure of enchanting you, with the flattering glances which she will abundantly bestow upon you. Distrust this Syren, who has no other view in charming you, than that of overwhelming you with contempt. I fear that, transported with joy, and too full of your love, you will betray yourself." "No, no, my dear Laura," replied Don Andre, "lay aside that fear: enough that I am apprised of the peril to enable me to shun it. Let me alone in the business; the haughty Cynthia will most probably be caught herself."

Alvarade, after having had this fresh conversation with Laura, came with an account

saloon. Another woman supplied with sashes of the same kind, distributes them to the gentlemen. After this, each of the gentlemen seeking the lady who wears the colour which marks her as his partner for the evening, accosts her, and remains at her feet all the time the *Sarao* lasts. He is allowed to address her in the most tender language, without her being at liberty to take offence: such is the rule, which of course often occasions intrigues. The *Sarao* concludes with dancing.

of it to me ; and we both congratulated ourselves upon it. Don Joaquin's daughter, on her part, meditating the conquest of a man who was already but too much taken with her beauty, employed herself in making preparations for her *Sarao* on the following evening. She sent tickets to the ladies whom she wished to be present ; and as Don Bernardo and Don Julian were of the number of the cavaliers who were likewise invited, Don Joaquin was extremely pleased, flattering himself with the hope that one or other of these gallants might render himself agreeable to his daughter. Don Andre, as it may be well supposed, was not forgotten. He also received his ticket, and the next day when the hour for the *Sarao* had arrived, went there gaily dressed, and disposed to acquit himself well of his part.

As soon as he entered the saloon, the woman who held the sashes designed for the gentlemen, presented him with a green one. He immediately put it on, and looking out for the lady who should have one of the same colour, he found her in the daughter of Don Joaquin. He advanced towards her, and accosting her

politely, "Madam," said he, "I look upon this day as the happiest of my life, since it falls to my lot to become the partner of the charming Cynthia." "Do not congratulate yourself too much on your good fortune," replied she; "the danger you are in, ought rather to make you tremble. You ought to complain of your chance; which would have been more favourable had it assigned you another lady. You might have been able to please her, instead of which you will derive no advantage from the conversation we shall have together. I will even apprise you out of charity, that if you have the misfortune to become enamoured of me, I shall treat you with the utmost rigour. This is what you may make up your mind to."

"You think to frighten me," replied my friend, "but fear yourself that your pride may be forced to stoop to mine; for, in short," continued he, assuming a tone of tenderness, "is it possible that you will not be touched by my pains, when, profiting by the liberty which the *Sarao* affords me to speak to you of love, I shall make known the deplorable

state to which I am reduced? Yes, lovely Cynthia, my heart is a prey to a thousand flames." So saying, he kissed her hand in transport. "Alvarade," replied the lady, repulsing him gently, "you contradict yourself: you express yourself in such a manner, and in such terms, as make me imagine that you really love me, though you think you do not. You do not remember that I told you, I should repay your sighs with contempt and rigour." "It is you, madam," replied Don Andre, "it is you that forget we are in a *Sarao*. All that I said was only affected." "What," cried the lady, "do you not feel what you have just been saying?" "Heaven preserve me from it!" returned the cavalier, changing his tone. "Who! I augment the number of your slaves? No, madam, though I were even capable of loving you, shame would oblige me to conceal it."

"You can, then, counterfeit extremely well," said Cynthia. "To perfection!" replied Alvarade: "I borrow when I please the eyes and language of the most tender love; for example, if I wished to make you a decla-

ration of love, I would say, Adorable Cynthia, it is not through gallantry, or to fulfill the duties of the *Sarao*, that I tell you my heart was surrendered to your earliest glances ; it is to discover to you my secret sentiments, since I can this day make you acquainted with them without raising your anger at my presumption." "And that was only pretended?" interrupted the lady, hastily. "Say no more, Alvarade: I see through your finesse; you pretend to be insensible to female beauty, flattering yourself that by that means you will render me more tractable. Have I not penetrated your design? Acknowledge it with a good grace, and you shall not repent it: rely on the promise which I make you."

Don Andre hesitated some moments before he answered: but determined at last to satisfy her at the expense of whom it might concern, he confessed the whole; after which he said, "Madam, I now await my doom; deign to pronounce it, decide my fate." "I might," replied Cynthia, "be-offended at your duplicity, and to punish you for it, treat you like my other lovers; but I pardon you for the

sake of the invention, and give you the preference over all your rivals."

I leave it to the reader to conceive the rapture which these last words caused my friend, who as long as the *Sarao* lasted, which was till the following morning, ceased not to manifest his gratitude to Don Joaquin's daughter. No sooner had he quitted this lady, than he ran to me to communicate to me his joy. He returned me a million of thanks for having advised him to assume the part which he had acted so successfully, telling me that I was the author of his felicity. In short, a fortnight after, he married his mistress, in prejudice of his two rivals, who at bottom were preferable to him.

Chapter Fourteenth.

Don Cherubin goes out of curiosity to hear a famous preacher, a father of the Order of Saint Dominick.—Who this monk was.—His surprise at recognizing him, and the interview he had with him.

A SHORT time after this marriage, it happened that a friar of the Order of Saint Dominick came from Guatemala to reside at Mexico. He preached at first in the cathedral, and made so much noise from the time of his first sermon, that he became the general subject of conversation in the town. Whatever house I entered, I heard nothing there but the praises of Father Cyril: the women in particular extolled him, and set him above the most famous preachers of the Order of Mercy, of Saint Francis, and even of the Jesuits, although among these latter were some of great celebrity. When he preached in a religious house, all the nobility flocked thither in crowds; and the price of seats was enhanced.

The congregation burst out in exclamations of applause. They even clapped their hands, and went out of the church praising the eloquence of the preacher to the skies.

I could not hold out against the reputation of Father Cyril, and was desirous of judging of his talents from my own observation. Having learned that he was to preach on the Day of the Assumption at his convent, I went thither, and found a numerous and brilliant congregation, though this monastery is a league from the town. I took my seat for my money among the rest of the auditors, and, while waiting for the sermon, conversed with a cavalier who was sitting near me. I asked him if he had ever heard Father Cyril. "Twice," replied he; "and I protest to you, that no preacher ever pleased me so much as he.

"You will be astonished," continued he, "with his dazzling style, and the beauty of his portraits. He has a choice of terms and an eloquence which set off everything, happy metaphors, judicious and charming allegories, beauties of detail, terms which are peculiar to himself, and, above all, the most nicely con-

ceived transitions. I warn you only, that it is necessary to listen to him with all the attention you are capable of; for he has a volubility of tongue which it is difficult to follow. I was at his last sermon at the Convent of Mercy: I had the misfortune to sneeze, and my sneezing caused me to lose a period." I replied, "that there were some preachers who spoke so quick, that one must not even turn one's eyes from them for a moment, if one would not lose the thread of their discourse."

This conversation, however, redoubled the impatience I felt to see this celebrated personage. I saw him ascend the pulpit, and the church immediately echoed with a general acclamation; which gave me to understand to what a point the public were prejudiced in his favour. Father Cyril appeared to me not bigger than a dwarf; and was really so small, that we could but just see his head. I was struck with his features; and scarcely had he pronounced his text ere I completely recognized him by the sound of his voice. "It is he," said I to myself. "Yes, faith, it is the

Licentiate Carambola. What a pleasant adventure ! It seems that we follow each other. We bade adieu in Toledo, and met again in Madrid, there we separated, and found each other at Barcelona. One would say that fortune takes pleasure in bringing us together. Then, doubting the report of my eyes and ears, "May I not deceive myself?" I reflected. "This is, indeed, his voice and figure, but do we not every day see men who exactly resemble each other ? Besides, can it be possible that Carambola has assumed the frock, and (what is beyond my comprehension,) become a great preacher ! This is what I cannot understand." Nevertheless, the more was I convinced that he was my Biscayan licentiate.

Whilst waiting until I should be able to convert my doubt into certainty, I listened attentively to the friar, to ascertain if the public were right in admiring his eloquence ; but he delivered himself so rapidly, that without sneezing I lost more than half of what he said. I heard, however, enough to console me for this loss ; I even made a remark which

did not redound to the glory of the preacher ; I observed that the auditors were only taken with his style, and that the orator spoke less to the heart than to the head.

When the sermon was concluded, I got myself conducted to the apartment of Father Cyril, who beheld me again with a surprise equal to that which I had felt on seeing him in the pulpit. We both embraced affectionately. "Signor Licentiate," said I, "thank heaven that we once more meet ; but acknowledge that this last rencounter is more astonishing than the rest. I should never have expected to find you in the habit of a Jacobin." "My astonishment," replied he, "is equal to yours, and you may easily imagine that I am not a little curious to know what you are doing in Mexico. I suppose you are not less so to know how I became a friar, and what is more a preacher of the first flight. We must satisfy each other. But let us put it off if you please till to-morrow, for two reasons : besides that I am fatigued, I have a long recital to make." "And on my side," returned I, "I have also an infinitude of things to recount to you.

Adieu, Father Cyril; repose yourself: we shall see each other again to-morrow."

Hereupon I left my preacher; and having rejoined him on the following day in the afternoon, we shut ourselves up in his apartment, where we prepared ourselves for mutually recounting what had happened since our last separation. I spoke first; and persuaded that I need have no reserve with my friend Carambola, I told him everything. When I had concluded, he recounted to me his own adventures with equal sincerity.

END OF PART FOURTH.

PART FIFTH.

Chapter First.

The Licentiate Carambola begins the history of his voyage to the West Indies.—He meets with one of his college companions.—Who he was.—He resolves to follow him, and becomes a friar.

“YOU know well,” said he, “that you left me at Barcelona, tutor to a spoiled child; I told you, if you remember, that I was very well satisfied with my post, that I possessed in it all the advantages which a pedagogue could anywhere have, and that, in all likelihood, I should occupy it a long while: nevertheless, I was obliged to leave it. They gave me my thanks; what do I say? They dismissed me unfairly enough. This was the reason: one day being a little out of humour with my young gentleman, into whose head I could not drive the first principles of the

Latin language, it happened that I forgot I was forbidden to chastise him, for fear of grieving and making him ill; and I pulled his ears, rather roughly I must acknowledge. He screamed as loud as if I had been burning him alive. His mother, who was within hearing, ran to him, and finding her son in tears, accused me of brutality. The father, who was not master in his own house, was desirous of interceding in my favor, but he was silenced as if he had been a child, and I was turned out of doors without further process.

“Some days after having been thus dismissed, as I was walking alone on the wharf, musing on the unpromising state of my affairs, I met two reverend fathers of Saint Dominick, of whom I recognized one as having been my fellow student at the university of Alcalá. We accosted each other, and after having cordially embraced, began to amuse ourselves with conversing on the little tricks we had played our professors at college. He then informed me that he had come from Salzona, with his companion, in order to

embark on the following day, on board a vessel, which was to sail for Cadiz, where they were both expected in their convent, one to the professor of philosophy, and the other of theology. 'I envy your happiness, fathers,' said I, sighing, 'and repent of not having embraced your life instead of having made myself a galley-slave, for such I call a poor devil of a tutor.'

"My schoolfellow began laughing at hearing me talk thus. 'I did not know,' said he, 'that the condition of a tutor was that of a galley-slave.' 'I can inform you then that it is so,' replied I, 'and you may take my word for it. I acknowledge that there are no rules without exceptions, and that there are houses where the slavery of pedagogues is mild, or at least supportable. At the house of an old prudish devotee, for instance, a hypocritical preceptor is not badly off: he possesses the confidence of his patroness, who sees but with his eyes, and who, as the price of his interested complaisance towards her, sometimes makes generous mention of him in her will. But such places are rare, and as

for me, I have hitherto met with none but wretched ones.'

" 'I am sorry,' replied the monk, 'that you are not content with your lot. I wish you were as much so as I am with mine. If every body knew how happy we Jacobins are, our cloister would not contain the great number who would eagerly press forward to inhabit it.' 'Ah! father,' cried I, 'you augment my regret for not having assumed the fortunate habit of Saint Dominick.' 'If you speak seriously,' said he, 'I will enable you to put it on when you please. It is not yet too late. Profit by the opportunity. Come with us to Cadiz: I will present you to the Reverend Father Isidore, prior of our house, and I am sure that he will receive you willingly among us, when he shall learn that you have made a noise among the schools of Alcala, where I have witnessed your brilliant studies. I still remember that they used to call you by way of excellence, *aquila theologiæ*,

" 'Yes, Signor Licentiate,' continued he, 'Father Isidore will look upon you, as an excellent acquisition to our Order, and will

owe me much good will for having procured it such an one. Determine; see what you will do?' 'I will take you at your word,' replied I, 'and would set out with you for Cadiz, if I were sufficiently well off for cash to defray the expenses of my journey and my reception; but I will candidly acknowledge to you, that all my property consists in a single doubloon, of which I owe three-fourths at the inn where I have been living since I was out of place.'

"'You have no need of money with us,' said the other friar; 'we are able to defray all the expenses on the journey: and as for your reception, be assured that it will be given gratuitously on consideration of your merit. Well! are there now any more difficulties to get over?' 'No,' replied I, 'there are none. Indeed, fathers, you inspire me; I am ready to follow you.'

"'My future companions appeared charmed to see me disposed to go along with them. 'We say not adieu, brother,' said my school-fellow, 'we shall have plenty of time for conversation. We leave you,' added he,

pointing with his finger to a vessel which was lying in the port, 'to deposit on board that ship, all the provisions necessary for our voyage; for we are not folks to embark without biscuit. Come and join us then this evening: we shall sail to-morrow before day.'

Chapter Second.

The Licentiate Carambola embarks with the good fathers of saint Dominick.—His reception to the noviciate.—He receives holy orders.—In what manner he preached the first time.—He mounts the pulpit a second time.—His success.—He sails for the Indies.—His astonishment on arriving there.

“NOT chusing to leave Barcelona like a swindler, I returned to my inn, where I paid my host ; then resuming my road to the port in order to attend my appointment, I arrived there with a small portmanteau, which I carried under my arm, and in which were my clothes. The monks were already on board, and waited for me with impatience. These good fathers, by way of precaution, had provided themselves with an abundance of viands, and a copious number of bottles of the best wines of La Mancha, as if they had been going to the end of the world. We weighed anchor the next day before the dawn of Aurora,

and our vessel soon left the port of Barcelona far behind. During the voyage, which, thank heaven, was very fortunate, our monks showed themselves so good humoured, that, far from repenting of having enrolled myself in their company, I incessantly congratulated myself upon it, persuading myself that no mortals were happier. I will assure you that I am this day in the same opinion.

“Arrived at Cadiz, we repaired to the monastery of the order of Saint Dominick. The prior Isidore received my two companions with distinction, as persons of whom his house was in need. He also gave me a favourable reception, as soon as he heard that I was a learned licentiate who desired the habit of a novice. He granted it to me without difficulty, on the their assurance that I was born to reside among them, as in fact I had sufficiently let them see on board ship, where I accommodated myself wonderfully well to their mode of living.

“I entered then upon my noviciate, and, thanks be to God, was not disgusted with the monastic life. After having professed, I was

called Father Cyril. I attached myself to the study of theology. I then took holy orders; and finding, in my own opinion, that I possessed talents for the pulpit, I composed a sermon, which I had the boldness to attempt delivering in the cathedral of Cadiz, before the Bishop and the Governor. But do you know how I acquitted myself? You shall learn; for my sincerity ought to correspond with your own, and we ought on both sides to recount our disagreeable adventures, with the same candor as the others. The assembly was numerous, and filled with monks of all orders. A congregation so enlightened, but at the same time so critical and jealous, agitated me to such a degree that I stopped short in the middle of my exordium. In vain I fatigued my memory to be able to continue; the rebel obstinately refused me his aid, and I was obliged to vanish. But before I disappeared I said to my auditors, 'Gentlemen, I am sorry for you; you lose a good sermon.'

"You may easily judge that these words, pronounced by a Biscayan," continued Father Cyril, "did not fail to produce laughter. The

Bishop and the Governor lost their gravity. All the monks, if you except those of our order, left the church stifling their laughter, and better satisfied than if I had preached to perfection.

“So unfortunate a coup d’essai did not discourage me. On the contrary, to retrieve my honour, I armed myself with audacity, and three months after remounted the same pulpit from which I had so disagreeably descended. Those of my auditors who had been witnesses of the trick which my memory had played me the first time, expected perhaps again to see me stop short, and to laugh anew at my expense; but they were deceived in their expectations; my memory was faithful, and I was generally applauded. What do I say? they found me an orator complete, and from that day forward I was placed on a parallel with the most famous preacher of Spain; a thing which proves that one may acquire a reputation at very little cost. This made me redouble my efforts to merit the praises which were bestowed on me, and which, in spite of my self-love, I was perfectly aware I did not

merit. I composed other sermons with which my auditors were so well satisfied, that my name became every day more famous.

“I was enjoying at Cadiz the general esteem of its inhabitants, when Father Isidore received a letter from America. The prior of Saint James of Guatemala, begged him to send over two skillful preachers to support the reputation of our order in that country. I was desirous of being one of these holy labourers: less in truth from apostolic zeal, than from my desire to see those fine countries which had been subdued by the Spanish arms. I can affirm that it was not without repugnance Father Isidore permitted me to go to the Indies, not having at that time in his community a member of equal value. Nevertheless he had the goodness to yield to my request, on condition that after some years, I should return to Spain.

“I set out then from Cadiz with Father Bonifacio de Tabara, who was appointed to accompany me. The wind which continued favourable until we reached the Havanna; thence we proceeded to Portobello during the

time of the fair, which beyond contradiction ought to be accounted the finest in the world. The prodigious concourse of Spanish and Peruvian merchants, of whom the one description come to buy, and the other to sell their goods, offer to the eyes a most amusing spectacle. As for me, what I found most worthy of notice, was the great number of mules which I saw arrive from Panama, loaded with bars and ingots of silver. In one hour I counted as many as two hundred, which were unloaded in the public square; making altogether some heaps of ingots extremely gratifying to the view of the parties interested.

“We did not remain long at Portobello. We again set sail for Venta de Cruzez, then Panama, whence we gained the port of the Salinas, and afterwards Carthagena. From this place we went to the town of Grenada, otherwise called Mahomet’s Garden from whence we did not long delay proceeding to the port of Realejo on the coast of the South Sea, and a few days after we arrived at the port of the Trinity.”

Here I interrupted Carambola rather bluntly: "Halloo! what the deuce," said I, "Signor Licentiate, you are making a traveler's journal. Do not name to me, I beg of you, all the places through which you passed: I acquit you of that trouble. I am only curious to hear your adventures. Be so good therefore as to make but one leap from the port of the Trinity to Saint James of Guatemala; for in all appearance this last named town is the theatre of the principal exploits you have to relate to me." "Signor Bachelor," said he, smiling, "you do wrong to complain: to avoid prolixity, and compress my story, I have passed over the tempests and other perils which I had to go through. I have even spared you the descriptions which I could have given of the places, of which I have simply told you the names, and which would perhaps be more interesting than my own adventures. Go, you have interrupted me very unreasonably.

"But in short," said he, "since you absolutely desire it, I will make you a leap of five-and-twenty leagues, by conveying you all

at once to Guatemala. Permit me first to tell only one thing of a most extraordinary nature. It is this : near the town of Trinidad, is seen in a deep hollow rising out of the earth without any intermission a thick and black smoke, mixed sometimes with sulphur and flames of fire. It is said that some travelers, curious to discover the cause, having had the imprudence to approach it too closely, have been thrown to the earth half dead. The people of the country assure us, that at a certain distance, they hear the cries of persons in torment, and that these cries are accompanied by a noise of iron chains ; which has caused the name of Hell to be given to this horrible chasm.

“Let us now come to Guatemala,” continued Father Cyril : “I will make you languish no longer. Father Bonifacio and I arrived there, then ; but (what was extremely laughable) we looked for the town in the town itself. Neither walls nor gates were to be seen at the entrance, and some thatched or tiled houses were all that presented themselves to our view. Surprised at this sight of a town

which corresponded so ill with the idea I had formed of it, I said to my companion, 'Father, are you not of opinion that we have done a very foolish business in quitting Cadiz, where we were so well off, to come and preach here? To judge of the citizens by their habitations, we have nothing but mob for our auditors. Is this the celebrated city of Guatemala, that capital of a kingdom three hundred leagues in extent, and where there is, we are told, a Court, independent of that of Mexico, with a first president, who, though without the title of Viceroy, has the authority of one? This is what I cannot understand.' 'Nor I, neither,' replied Father Bonifacio; 'I am almost inclined to think that they have been playing tricks with us.'

"Our astonishment, however, was of no long duration. When we had got beyond the thatched houses we found some more handsome, and among others, two superb edifices which are in the quarter of Saint Dominick, that is to say the Jacobins' convent, and the nunnery of the Conception. This last in particular, surrounded by high walls of an im-

mense circumference, long attracted our attention : it appeared to us a town of itself enclosed in that of Guatemala. There are in this convent as many as a thousand females, including the nuns, boarders, and black women who are in their service.

“In proportion as we advanced into this capital, we found houses which did it more honour than the first. We at last presented ourselves at the gate of the convent of our fathers, who received us like two personages whose arrival was agreeable to them. Father Valentin Tiraquello, who was at that time prior, had no sooner read the letter which I presented him from Father Isidore, than he gave us a thousand testimonies of friendship, and to me in particular, because the letter contained a magnificent eulogium on Father Cyril. They regaled us extremely well, and left us some days to repose ourselves in.

“During this time the report ran in the town, that two great preachers had just arrived from Spain. Nothing more was requisite to set all the Spanish families in motion, and in particular the female part of them.

‘When shall we see them?’ cried one. ‘How impatient I am,’ said another, ‘to hear these new apostles!’ ‘Father Cyril,’ said the prior to me one day, ‘I can no longer hold out against the curiosity of the public: the gentry, the courtiers, the citizens—all the town ardently desire to see you in the pulpit, to judge if you answer your great name. They press me to grant them this satisfaction, and I cannot help incessantly promising them that they shall have it.’ ‘I will fulfill your promise, my reverend father,’ said I: ‘I will, if you please, preach to-morrow in our church to satisfy them.’

Chapter Third.

Father Cyril preaches to the satisfaction of a numerous auditory.—He goes on the following day to dine with the Bishop of Guatemala.—His visit to a number of nuns.—Collations and concerts which they give him.—Private conversation which the Bishop had with him.—Subject of this conversation.

“THE Prior, finding me in his mind, sent immediate notice to the principal houses, that the Reverend Father Cyril would make his first appearance on the following day at the convent of the Jacobins. This news spread so rapidly over Guatemala, that on the morrow our church was filled with all the respectable people in the town. On one hand, the congregation was honoured with the venerable presence of Don Francisco de Castro, Bishop of Guatemala, and on the other, by all the officers of the Chancery, from the principal down to the register, without mentioning the

principal ladies of the town, all dressed out with the most extraordinary magnificence. As soon as I entered the pulpit, there arose a slight murmur, which appeared to me to be caused by my pigmy-like figure, for nothing escapes notice : but I had not finished my exhortium, before this disagreeable noise was followed by one of a more flattering nature ; and every one, forgetting in a manner that he saw me, listened to me with attention.

“ If I had had the happiness of pleasing at Cadiz, I had it in a more eminent degree at Guatemala. To say all in a word, I gained the approbation of my auditors, and obtained the esteem of the bishop, who sent to me the next morning to invite me to dine, together with the prior, at the Episcopal palace.

“ This good prelate, who, although a Septuagenary, had not yet an air of antiquity, overloaded me with compliments. He congratulated Father Valentin on having a person, so capable as I was of doing honour to the order of Saint Dominick. Judge whether his lordship’s praises failed to tickle the heart of a Biscayan. I inwardly relished them ;

but the more I found my vanity flattered, the more modest did I appear, like all other authors when they are praised in their own presence.

“Besides the esteem of this prelate, I attracted that of the principal courtiers, who unanimously praised me, so that it was decided that little Father Cyril was the Coryphæus of preachers in the Indies. I pleased not only people of the world, my reputation penetrated the walls of the monastery of the Conception. The nuns were desirous of hearing me, and I delighted them. Some of them wrote to me to testify in how great a degree they were satisfied with my sermon, and to invite me to go and see them at the grate; which I failed not to do when I was informed that at Guatemala, as at Mexico, the monks freely visit the nuns, who converse with them in the parlours, and sometimes entertain them with collations accompanied by music. This happened to myself on the very first visit I made to those ladies who had written me such obliging letters. They regaled me with confections, and made me listen to some very fine voices; among others, that of the young mother Donna

Angela de Montalvan, daughter of an officer of the Court, and a person, perhaps, of the greatest merit in the world.

“One sees few women, who, with great beauty, have not a defective figure, or, perhaps, a contracted mind; but it may be said that Nature, in forming Donna Angela, was desirous of effecting a work of perfection. It is most certain that this nun, who had but just entered on her fifth lustrum, was an incomparable girl. She understood music thoroughly, and joined to a ravishing voice a superior genius. She addressed me two or three times with such sprightliness and with an air so gracious, that I imagined I beheld an angel. She enchanted both my eyes and my ears.

“I left the convent of the Conception, and returned home, much taken with the politeness of the nuns, and perhaps too much with the merit of the young devotee of whom I have spoken. ‘Well, Father Cyril,’ said our prior, “are you satisfied with our neighbours?” ‘I have reason to be so,’ said I. ‘These ladies regaled me with confections,

and a concert marvelously well executed.' 'I have no doubt of it,' replied Father Valentin, 'particularly if the mother de Montalvan took a part in it.' 'Yes, truly, did she,' said I; 'she sang in it, and I thought her voice admirable.' 'You must also have remarked,' replied he, 'that this girl is possessed of an uncommon beauty.' 'That is what I paid no attention to,' said I, with a hypocritical air: 'I thought of nothing but listening to her.' This was not altogether true: for no sooner had the touching sounds of Angela's voice reached my ears, than I looked at nothing else but her, but I did not dare acknowledge that I had made this observation, for fear I should appear to him to have been too deeply interested in it.

"'I am sorry,' returned the prior, who was a simple, natural kind of man, 'that you did not attentively consider the mother de Montalvan; you would have seen a celestial face. Signor Don Francisco de Castro, our bishop, has a most particular esteem for her. He goes every day to see her, and every day sends her presents. He might be suspected of be-

ing enamoured of her, if his consummate virtue and his great age did not put his Excellency above such suspicion : but the world do justice to this venerable prelate, and all the town, as well as myself, are persuaded that he has for this lady only a pure and delicate friendship.' If I had not known Father Valentin to be a man incapable of slandering his neighbour, and particularly his bishop, I should have thought that he was not speaking seriously ; nevertheless he thought what he said, so great was his opinion of his lordship's virtue.

"Two days after having been to visit the nuns of the Conception, a gentleman called upon me from the prelate, to say that his Excellency desired to speak to me. I immediately went to the palace, where Signor Don Francisco having taken me into his closet, addressed me in the most obliging and flattering terms ; then all on a sudden changing the subject, 'Father Cyril,' said he, 'I have need of you, to succeed in a design which I have in contemplation. I flatter myself you will not refuse your assistance. The nuns of the

Conception, who lost their Superior about a fortnight ago, are about to elect another. I am desirous that their choice should fall on the mother de Montalvan. It will be necessary to form a vigorous faction in her favour. I have already been able to gain over some of these ladies: they have promised me their votes, and I am confident of having the majority if you second it.'

"'My lord,' replied I 'you may dispose of your servant: lay your commands on me; what am I to do?' 'I know,' replied he, 'that you have made acquaintance with several nuns of this monastery, and that they have conceived the highest esteem for you. I shall be much obliged by your speaking to them successively in private about the approaching election, and employing your eloquence to bring them to the way of thinking which I desire.'

"'I do not think, my lord,' said I, 'that I shall have much trouble in succeeding in this negotiation. I am persuaded that all the nuns will readily conform to your Excellency's sentiments.' 'I doubt it,' cried he;

‘let us not flatter ourselves. The extreme youth of Angela is a terrible difficulty to surmount. There are in this convent twenty nuns of high rank, who have been more than thirty years devoted to religion, and whose conduct has always been irreproachable. With what eye will these behold authority placed in the hands of a young nun? However,’ added he, heaving a sigh which showed me the interest he took in the affair, ‘this nun, young as she is, deserves to have the preference over all her companions.

“‘You have seen her,’ he continued, ‘you have seen her in the parlour; but she did no more than appear before you for an instant. You know not all her worth: you must have seen her more than once; you must in short be acquainted with her to be able to estimate her, to perceive her merit in its full extent. What wit she has! If she open her mouth to speak, it is a bon mot which escapes her. If a subject is to be argued, her reasons are just and solid. A girl of twenty! how amiable is this! But what can never be sufficiently praised, and which, alone, renders her

worthy of being superior, is her extreme mildness: happy consequence of her temperament and her virtue! Exempt from those sallies of humour which the most sensible persons cannot at all times restrain, she converses with a tranquillity of soul which nothing can disturb. In a word, she unites in her person every amiable and estimable quality. It is this rare merit which interests me for her; and, between ourselves, I do not think that her youth ought to exclude her from a rank, for which I consider her born.'

"I saw very plainly by this discourse, that his lordship suffered himself to be rather too much swayed by his pure and delicate friendship for Angela, and his project appeared to me extravagant. Nevertheless (what I shall reproach myself for all my life), instead of combating, and representing to him the folly of it, I approved of it against my conscience, in order to pay court to the prelate and get into his good graces. It is thus that the great find almost always, among common persons, ministers ready to serve their passions. I assured his Excellency that I de-

voted myself entirely to him, and that I was about to do my utmost to acquit myself successfully of the commission with which he honoured me. The old bishop, delighted with the zeal I evinced in his service, embraced me affectionately; and by his embraces which flattered my vanity, put the finishing stroke to confirming me in this silly enterprise.

Chapter Fourth.

Of the exertions which Father Cyril made to give success to the Bishop's faction.—What was the result.—An unexpected disturbance arises at the convent gates.—Consequence of this event.

“To show the more haste, I made but one leap from the Episcopal palace to the monastery of the Conception. I saw there the nuns with whom I was acquainted, and conversed separately with each of them. I found them very much opposed to the will of the prelate; but the opposition of each did but afford a triumph to my rhetoric. This encouraged me. I then spoke to others of the community, and principally to some of those who, thinking they themselves deserved the preference, looked upon it as an intolerable injustice that it should be decided in favour of a person of two and twenty. You will easily believe that these ancient mothers, did not easily yield. Nevertheless, shocked as

they were at what I proposed, I succeeded at last in inducing them to comply with it ; as if I had had the talent of Carneades* for persuasion. In short, I succeeded so well, that in less than a week I secured the vote of the greater part of these ladies.

“I carried this agreeable news to my lord, who received it with inexpressible transports of joy, and gave me thanks from the bottom of his heart. He made me, besides, a present of a gold watch, which he obliged me to accept, and which I received, although a Dominican. After having given me a thousand marks of affection, he begged me to go and see the young mother de Montalvan, and inform her of the happy effect of my exertions ; which I readily did. I gave her an account of what I had done for her, and assured her that in all likelihood she could not fail of becoming Superior. Upon this, she thanked me for my pains, and gave loose

* Cato the Censor was for banishing the philosopher Carneades, because by his eloquence he bewildered the mind in such a way that it was not possible to distinguish truth from falsehood.

to her gratitude in terms and with an air, which enchanted me. How agreeable did I find her ! I admired those estimable qualities which caused his lordship so warmly to interest himself in her behalf.

“However, the day of election arrived, and we should doubtless have had a majority of votes, if all the ancient mothers of the community had not united in favour of the mother Saint Bridget, sister of an old president of the Audience, and beyond contradiction the most worthy subject among them. This union, which we had not foreseen, and which after all we could not have prevented, disconcerted our enterprise. Discord was raised in the convent ; and farther, the report having spread in the town, that it was intended to elect for Superior a nun of two and twenty, several of the principal inhabitants took fire on the subject. They ran sword in hand to the monastery, threatening to force open the gates, to defend their daughters against the faction raised by the bishop in favour of the mother de Montalvan. It was necessary, in order to appease the tumult, that the father of this

lady should go to the monastery, and exert the power he had over his daughter, to engage her to desist from her pretensions: this I believe she did with regret, for this little lady was as ambitious as beautiful. By this means the disorder ceased, and peace was re-established both in the town and the convent. Thus the mother Angela was compelled to remain a simple nun, and to content herself with being the prettiest of the community; which some of her companions would have preferred to the honour of being Superior.

Chapter Fifth.

How, after the business of the election, Father Cyril became parish priest of Petapa.— Of the advantages he found in his cure.— He learns the Proconchi with facility.— Singular manner in which the Indians celebrate the patron of their churches.

“I KNOW not whether the bishop or I looked most foolish of the two after this adventure, which made a terrible noise in the city of Guatemala. This prelate, whom I have never seen since that time, was so mortified with having been foiled in an affair of so interesting a nature, that he came to the resolution of shutting himself up in his palace, to hide his confusion from the malignant view of the public. On my part, monk as I was, I was not much less ashamed than himself; I dared not show myself; for, as I was known in the town for one, whose fault it was not that the Mother de Montalvan was not abbess, the sight of me might have excited hisses. For

all the gold in the world I would not then have preached in Guatemala, imagining that I was no longer looked on but as the secret agent of Signor Don Francis de Castro. This idea gave me so much pain, that I resolved to abandon my residence in this town, however agreeable it was.

“I communicated my design to the prior, who, judging like myself, that after what had passed, I actually had reason to wish myself out of Guatemala, replied, ‘Father Cyril, I am of your opinion. You will do well to disappear for some time. Father Bonifacio, next to you, the best preacher of our order, will preach here during your absence. I have,’ continued he, ‘a solid establishment to propose to you. You know that we are collators of almost all the cures in the environs of Guatemala: I offer you the most considerable, which is that of Petapa, a large market town about six leagues from hence. Father Estefano, one of our monks, who has had it more than thirty years, needs repose, and demands a successor. Go to him and act as his coadjutor, until he shall abandon his place in your

favour, which he will doubtless do as soon as he shall have instructed you in the language of the Indians. I promise you that you will do very well in that country, which is, besides, one of the most delicious in America.'

"I set out then from Guatemala, carrying a letter from Father Valentin to the old curate of Petapa. I was mounted on a mule from the stables of our convent, and an Indian accompanied me on foot. In order to follow exactly the instructions which the Prior had given me, I stopped at Mixco, a village near Petapa, and remained there until the following day, that the Alcades and Regidors, whom I caused to be apprised of my arrival, might have time to prepare for receiving me, as they commonly receive the priests or monks who come to be their pastors ; I mean with a pomp which fully marks the respect and consideration they have for them. Accordingly they preceded me on the following day for about a league with singers, trumpeters and hautboy-players. Besides this I found on entering the town, triumphal arches, decorated with branches of trees, and the streets through which I had to pass were strewed with flowers.

“I was thus ceremoniously conducted to the Presbytery, where Father Estefano, after having read my letter of credit, gave me a reception such as might have gratified a pastor more vain than myself. This good Jacobin, though advanced in years, appeared still robust, and enjoyed an old age exempt from infirmities. With all the good sense he had had in his best days, he preserved a gaiety of humour which made him agreeable in society. ‘I see very plainly,’ said he, ‘by this letter, that Father Valentin is giving me a successor, who will soon cause the loss of me to be forgotten among the inhabitants of Petapa.

‘I am greatly rejoiced at it,’ continued he, ‘and I would leave this to-morrow to go and finish my holy career in some one of our cloisters, if you would not be in want of me; but I am necessary to you to teach you the Proconchi, which is the language of the Indians, and which it is absolutely necessary that a priest should be acquainted with in this town, where they scarcely speak any Spanish, the officers and the gentry being almost all of Indian race. The talent which you have

for preaching would be useless to you here, unless you learn the Proconchi: did not Father Valentin tell you this?' 'Pardon me,' replied I, 'truly he did represent to me the necessity of it; but he told me at the same time, that you would instruct me in it in less than three months.' 'He told you truth,' replied Father Estefano: 'I am thoroughly acquainted with this idiom. I have even composed a grammar and a dictionary in the Indian language, and these two works have had the honour of being approved of by the Academy of Petapa.'

"At this word academy I burst out laughing. 'How,' cried I, 'there is an academy in this town. There is not then, a small town without one!' 'This is much celebrated,' returned Father Estefano, with a very serious air; 'by the same token that I am an old member of this respectable body, into which you will also enter shortly; for I design immediately to qualify you for preaching to the Indians in Proconchi; and when you shall be well acquainted with this language, the members of the academy will send two deputies of

their company to offer you a place among them: of this I can assure you.'

"At so flattering an assurance, I manifested so much desire to learn Proconchi, that, without loss of time, he instructed me in the first principles. I profited so well by his instructions, and applied so closely to study, that in three months I became capable of composing in that tongue an exhortation which I learned by heart, and had the boldness to deliver in public; in which I was so successful, that the Indian connoisseurs looked on me from that moment, as one who knocked at the door of the academy.

"If you ask me the nature of the Proconchi idiom, I will answer you that it is a tongue which has its declensions and its conjugations, and that you may learn it as easily as Greek or Latin; more easily, indeed, because it is a living tongue, which one may possess in a short time by conversing with Indian purists. For the rest, it is harmonious, and more loaded with figures and metaphors than even our own. If an Indian who prides himself on speaking Proconchi well desire to

make you a compliment, he will employ in it only fantastical singular thoughts, and laboured expressions. It is an obscure, inflated style, a glowing verbiage, a pompous nonsense ; but this is what forms its excellence. It is the tone of the academy of Petapa.

“I had little difficulty in conforming to it, the Biscayan genius being friendly to obscurity. I made such rapid progress in the language of the Indians, that the old curate seeing me qualified worthily to replace him, put me in possession of his cure, and set out for Guatemala there to pass the rest of his days.

“After his departure I remained master of the parsonage, where I began living in the style of one who holds a good benefice : for, till that time, be it said without offence to any body, Father Estefano, for fear no doubt of turning me from the study of the Proconchi, had taken the trouble of receiving himself the whole of the revenue of the cure, which did not amount to less than two thousand crowns of good Spanish money. This monk, with many good qualities, had one bad one ; he was avaricious. Of this he had made me

perfectly sensible by the frugality which I had seen prevail in our repasts, composed almost entirely of butter, cocoa, and detestable liquors. For this reason the first trouble I conceived I ought to dispatch, was that of having a better table, and enlarging the number of my domestics. I took into my service a black whom one of our alcades gave me as a skillful cook, and with whom I was in fact well satisfied.

“This black whose name was Zamor, had been scullion at the house of a President of the Audience of Guatemala, and had there learned the business of the kitchen. He served up to me every day some new dish which bore ample testimony to his skill, and tickled my sensuality. Sometimes he gave me pudding made with Indian corn and fowl or fresh pork, seasoned with chili or long pepper, and sometimes he regaled me with a stewed hedgehog, or occasionally with a sort of lizard which they call iguana, which has black and green scales on its back, and resembles a scorpion.”

Father Carambola, remarking at this pas-

sage, that I was making wry faces, could not help laughing. "Signor Bachelor," said he, "it appears to me that the viands of which I am speaking, do not make your mouth water." "No, I protest to you," replied I, "they are more calculated to turn an honest man's stomach than to flatter his palate: I will never have Zamor for my cook." "Nevertheless," replied Father Cyril, "I assure you that these ragouts are not so bad as you imagine; and I am persuaded that if you had once come across them, you would render them more justice. A hedgehog and an iguana well cooked and seasoned have an exquisite flavor: any one eating of either would suppose it a rabbit. The Spaniards as well as the Indians, conform very generally to such food in the country of Guatemala. The principal officers of the Chancery prefer them to quails, partridges or pheasants." "It is all very well," returned I: "there is good reason for saying, that one must not argue upon tastes."

"God be praised!" cried the friar, as if he had not already sufficiently extolled his hedgehogs and lizards, "I protest to you, that I

found these viands delicious. I also eat with pleasure, both land and sea turtles; and it was to me a feast of the gods, when with this ambrosia I drank nectar, that is to say, a drink called by the Indians Chicha, composed of water and the juice of the sugar cane, with a little honey. Nevertheless, excellent as was this beverage, I became disgusted with it when I found that, in order to give it strength, they throw into the vessel in which it is made some leaves of tobacco, and sometimes a live toad, and that it often causes the death of people who have drunk too freely of it. I therefore renounced Chicha as soon as I found in what manner it was made, and stuck to other drinks, which it must be acknowledged were not equal to the wines which are drunk in Europe; but thanks be to heaven, one gets accustomed to everything.

“With my cook Zamor, I had besides four other domestics; one who waited at table, and did my errands to the town; another whose employment was to go out to collect my tithes, which consisted in eggs, poultry and a certain sum of money which was regularly paid me

every month by the regidores ; a gardener, with a valet and a groom ; for I kept a mule to carry me when I went to preach in a little village about three leagues from Petapa. This little village, which was called Mixco, produced me a great revenue. I went there often, and never without bringing home half a dozen fowls at least, with cocoa to make my chocolate, without counting the money given me for my mass and my sermon : for notwithstanding I had to do with auditors very little capable of deriving advantage from my exhortations, I did not fail always to mount the pulpit, and preach to some purpose ; so that my presbytery was well furnished with provisions.

“ As each village is dedicated to some saint, whose festival the inhabitants celebrate during eight days, the patron of Mixco is highly honoured during his octave, and the curate has every reason to be satisfied with the offerings he receives. The brethren of St. Hyacinth rejoice in a manner, which, in my opinion, deserves to be succinctly detailed to you. On the first day the men, with the pret-

tiest girls in the village, dress themselves out in fine silks or linen stuffs, ornament themselves with feathers and ribbons, and join together in well concerted dances, which they execute to perfection. But, what I by no means approve, and can only be pardoned in Indians who are still in idolatry, is that they begin dancing in the church, and continue it in the church-yard. After this, the rest of the eight days are passed in banquets, prodigally supplied with Chicha, of which all the guests drink till they are ready to burst.

Chapter Sixth.

Father Cyril makes himself beloved and esteemed by the Indians.—Interesting history of two brothers and a sister.—He preaches in Proconchi, and by the beauty of his sermons obtains a place in the Academy of Petapa.

“I FEATHERED my nest then pretty well, both at Mixco and Petapa. Though I was obliged to send three hundred crowns a year to our house at Guatemala, there still remained with me money enough, not to allow me cause for envying the happiness of the monks of Peru, who hold benefices in the Indian villages, and keep all they can get. I was neither less rich, nor less happy. Besides that I could have paid my convent five, instead of three hundred crowns, I began to carry on a little underhand traffic in merchandise, a thing which I confess was a little against my vow of poverty; but what would you have? I imi-

tated other monks, who had good cures like myself. Such is the effect of bad example.

“The Indians of the environs of Guatemala are a mild, gentle kind of people: all they desire is to live in peace. They would love even the Spaniards themselves, if these would treat them with humanity. We must, however, except a species of black slaves who live in the Indigo farms. These are ferocious and formidable fellows. Though they have no other weapon than a small lance, they have the boldness to face a wild bull in the height of his fury, and to attack crocodiles in the river, which they do not quit till they have killed them: such slaves sometimes make their masters tremble. As for the Indians of Petapa, I pronounce them the best in America: as polished as the others are clownish, they form together a mild society, in which reigns a spirit of concord and fraternal amity. But what is the most to be admired, is their good faith and integrity. Of this I will recount to you an instance:

“A noble and rich Indian of Petapa died, and left a tolerably large succession to his

daughter and two sons. The eldest of the two brothers undertook to divide it into three equal portions. When he had done so, he desired his brother and sister to take their choice. 'You are our elder,' answered they; 'it is for you to choose.' 'No,' replied he, 'since I have made the lots, it is right that you should take which of them you please.' The younger brother and the sister each chose a lot, and the third remained to the elder. There was in this latter a heavy coffer, in which had been contrived a secret drawer, where he discovered by chance a thousand pieces of gold. Having made this discovery he invited his brother and sister to a repast, towards the end of which he served them up all the money in a dish, saying, 'Here is what I found hid unknown to me in a coffer, which fell to my lot; we must share it—justice demands it.'

"I lived in the most perfect union with these Indians, who loved me, Spaniard though I was. I amused myself with them every day. I conversed freely, and played at cards with their wives, of whom they are not jealous, and who for the most part are so sprightly,

that it is a pleasure to hear them speak Proconchi. The members of the Academy of Petapa consult them too, very often; and when in the conferences of these gentlemen their opinions are divided upon any word, they say, 'We must consult the women on the subject.' This proves that the Academy are very gallant.

"The Indian ladies, then, decide, and their decisions are respected, sometimes even in contempt of the grammar of Father Estefano. I knew, among others, a lady at whose house the choice spirits of the town assembled, and whom they listened to as an oracle: she expressed herself with wonderful elegance, and decided so judiciously on all works of taste, that she never found any to contradict her. This lady was widow of a noble Indian, who had left her wealth enough to live in a manner suitable to her quality. I went often to see her, and met at her house, almost every day, members of the Academy, whose conversation I turned to account. I retained everything remarkable which I heard them say. I took notice of their turns, of their expressions;

and I remarked that these men had a mode of thinking superior to that of ordinary persons. In fine, by listening to them I finished learning all the delicacies of the Proconchi language.

“When I thought I possessed the spirit and the refinements of it, I was bold enough to wish to preach before the whole body of the Academy. But, in order to be sure of pleasing these masters of the Indian language, I bethought myself of an expedient which crowned my boldness with success. Among the books which Father Estefano, on returning to Guatemala, had left to render me perfect in Proconchi, I found, besides his dictionary and grammar, a collection of discourses recently pronounced at the Academy of Petapa: I turned it over; and fishing, as one may say, in troubled waters, extracted the most brilliant phrases, the newest modes of speaking, and composed from them a sermon which struck the members of the Academy with wonder. ‘There was something very fine in it,’ said they one to the other; ‘this Jacobin says some

very good things, and in a style marked with our stamp.'

"What shall I say? These gentlemen were so satisfied with my diction, or, if you will, with their own, that at their first meeting they resolved to associate me in their glorious labours. They sent to announce to me this honour by two of their deputies. I had again recourse to my collection in order to compose a discourse, and the day of my reception being arrived, I returned my acknowledgments to my new brethren, delivering myself with effrontery to their very beards in their own phrases."

Chapter Seventh.

Of the Indian ladies of Petapa.—Marvelous secret for rendering a person amorous, and of which they sometimes avail themselves.—Of the great and holy enterprise which Father Cyril undertook, and what was the result of it.

FATHER Cyril was about to continue his narration, but I first asked him a question. "You have," said I, "been just extolling the minds of the Indians of Petapa, without saying anything of their beauty. This does not prepossess me in favour of their charms." "They are not less handsome than those of Mexico," replied he, "nor less neatly dressed, but their habiliments are of a different kind.

"They wear instead of a shift, a species of surplice, which they call *guiapil*, which descends from the shoulders below the waist, with very large sleeves, so short that they do not cover more than half the arms. This *guiapil* is ornamented on the stomach with

some work of feathers or of cotton, which rather serves to set off the bosom than to hide it. With that they have bracelets and earrings, but no covering on the head; their hair is only turned up with silken fillets. They go with the legs bare, and wear shoes fastened with a large ribbon.

“I speak to you only of rich women or those of quality, for the others go barefoot, and have but a simple mantle of wool which they wrap around them; a thing which at first view does not dazzle the eyes. Nevertheless, though these have not a seducing appearance at the first glance, they do not fail to make their conquests. There are some noble Indians and Spaniards of capricious taste who court them: they go secretly to see them in their thatched cabins, where all the dwelling consists in one low room, in the middle of which these Indians make a fire for dressing their food: and as there is no vent in the roof of the cabin, the smoke necessarily fills the whole room in such a manner, that it may be said of these gallants, that being there as in an oven, they are smothered with love and smoke.”

Let us return to the wives of the principal Indians. These inhabit houses, better built and better furnished. When they go to church or on a visit, they wear a veil of Holland, Spanish, or Chinese linen, which covers the head, and descends to the ground; but when they return home, they let down the upper part of the guiapil so effectually as to leave the neck and shoulders bare. It is true that, either through decency or affectation, they speedily replace the guiapil if a man come to visit them. I say from affectation, for they are not naturally either cruel or hypocritical. Far from arming themselves against the young men who court them, they usually give them fair play. In short, they are gallant, like the other Indians; but at the same time very superstitious. Whatever inclination they may feel for a man who courts them, they will not yield to his love until they have consulted the flight and the song of birds, or made observations on the meeting of animals who are passing along the roads. If from these they draw a favourable omen, the gallant has every

thing to hope for, instead of which, if they conceive from them an unfavourable presage, he has only to seek his fortune elsewhere.

“Some of these Indians carry superstition farther, and resort to magic to secure the success of their enterprises. I remember that one of them, wishing to inspire with love an Indian girl, whose heart he knew to be otherwise engaged, composed an amorous philtre which rendered her unfaithful.”

“What is it you are saying, Father Cyril?” interrupted I, laughing. “You are using the traveler’s license; you are relating fables.” “There is no disputing facts,” said he, “and what I relate to you is one of which I was myself a witness. I can tell you moreover that the philtre was composed of the powder of the colibri. The colibri,” added he, “is a bird of brilliant plumage, and nearly about the size of a starling. They put it to dry in the sun, then pulverize it; and this fatal powder, mixed in wine or any other liquor, conveys the poison of love into the heart of the person whom it is desired to inflame, according to the intentions of him who performs the

charm. Do not give faith unless you please, to what I have told you ; but it is certain that several Indians have assured me of having seen this powder used with succes. The woman who employed it so efficaciously, herself avowed it to me."

In vain the monk would have had me seem persuaded of this, in vain he protested that nothing was more true ; I could not believe him. Nevertheless it will be seen in the event, by an adventure which happened to myself, that the story of the Indian lover detached from his mistress by sorcery, might probably not be a fable.

"To finish describing to you the Indians of Petapa," pursued Father Cyril, "I must tell you that they profess the Catholic religion only to outward view. What passes their comprehension meets in them with nothing but incredulity. My efforts to convert them were useless, though I employed for that purpose, the most energetic expressions in the Proconchi language. These intractable and superstitious spirits adore in secret their idols of stone and wood. They preserve in their

houses with religious care a toad or some similar animal, to the life of which they firmly believe that their own is attached.

“When I say they adore their idols in secret, it is to be understood that they would not dare to offer them public worship. The Spaniards prevent this, and treat their false divinities very roughly when they have the misfortune to fall into their hands. But of this these idolaters take particular care. They generally hide them in some cavern, of which they close up the mouth, and in which they assemble at night, as in a pagoda, to adore them. If unfortunately for them, their pastors be informed of these nocturnal meetings, it is for him to put them in order; which he can do, by demanding assistance from the alcaides and regidores, who, to show themselves zealous Catholics, fail not to supply him with Spanish soldiers to escort him and demolish their idols. But expeditions of this kind are not without danger to an ecclesiastic, who by means of them puts himself in the way of obtaining the crown of martyrdom by having the Indians tear him to pieces.

“So glorious an end is not to the taste of all pastors. Father Estefano had always taken care to avoid it. He contented himself with preaching the word of God to his parishioners, without going to destroy their idols; and I believe I should have done very well following his example, instead of yielding to the temptation which one day assailed me of deserving a place in the martyrology. Having learned that at the foot of a mountain between Mixco and Petapa, there was a cavern which concealed an idol, and in which were frequently held secret meetings, I gave information of it to the alcades, bravely offering myself to destroy the idol. These officers praised my zeal and courage, and furnished me with an escort of twenty well armed Spaniards, at the head of whom I marched proudly towards the cavern in the middle of the night.

“We found it lighted up with a prodigious quantity of wax candles, and saw about five hundred Indians, men and women, some of whom were offering incense to the idol, whilst others danced, singing praises to it. This idol was nothing more than a large painted dra-

gon, elevated on an altar of stone. Our arrival disturbed the festival; and the appearance of my soldiers, who had all their swords in their hands, terrified the idolators so much, that, far from putting themselves in a posture for defending their divinity, they thought of nothing but making their escape.

“I ordered that they should not be opposed in their flight, and that no harm should be done them. I gave over the dragon to my escort, who broke it into a thousand pieces. After this I returned in triumph to Petapa, looking on this fine exploit as a very important service rendered to the church.

Chapter Eighth.

Consequence of this glorious expedition.—Of the danger in which Father Cyril found himself, and of the prudent course he took to extricate himself from it.—He retires to his monastery.—He receives an order from his provincial to go and preach at Mexico.

“So vigorous an execution made a great noise in the country. Those of the Indians who were really converted did not disapprove of it; but the others, by far the more numerous, viewing it as a sacrilege which they ought not to leave unpunished, held a council together, in which it was decreed that I should, one fine night, be assassinated in my house.

“All their measures were taken for striking this blow, and my ruin was inevitable, had not heaven interposed. But the objects which it had in view for me engaged its bounty not to abandon me, and permitted that on the day before that appointed for the execution of the project, I should receive an

anonymous letter, apprising me of my danger. This charitable information came to me from an Indian woman to whom one of the conspirators had revealed the business, and who, though an idolatress, had preferred the life of an honest man to the revenge of her idol.

“On the receipt of this letter, which appeared to me deserving of attention, I made up my bundle, composed of all my money; and without saying a single word to my servants, which could cause them to suspect my design, I mounted my mule and took the road to Guatemala, without chusing to be accompanied but by my guardian angel, who, if he saved me from the danger which threatened me, did not preserve me from fear. I looked a thousand times behind me to see if any were following, and I was finally fortunate enough to arrive safe and sound at our monastery.

“I related to our prior my holy prowess, which he praised less than my flight. ‘Father Cyril,’ said he, ‘to console you for having lost the crown of martyrdom which the

Indians designed you, I have an agreeable piece of news to announce to you. There is wanting in Mexico a monk of our order who has a talent for preaching: the Jesuits and Cordeliers at the present moment take the lead of us in that city. We have need of some powerful person to maintain the balance, and we have cast our eyes on you. Our provincial, on the report which I have made him of the applause which your sermons received at Guatemala, is desirous of sending you to Mexico. I was on the point of writing to you by his orders, to recall you from Petapa: you could not have come more critically in time.'

"This news gave me so much the more pleasure, as I wished to see Mexico; Father Cyril found his vanity not a little flattered by the choice which had been made of him, to go and dispute the honour of the pulpit in this fine city, against such formidable rivals. I therefore prepared myself for obeying the orders of the father provincial, who, in a conversation we had together before my departure, particularly recommended that I

should labour to sustain by my sermons the good name which the preachers of our order have always had in the Indies. His reverence then assured me that my toils should be, one day, well recompensed; and joining to this assurance a letter which he wrote in my favour to the father prior of our convent in Mexico, he gave me his benediction, with which I took the road to this great town. I had for my guide an Indian who was perfectly acquainted with the road, and who had the address to enable me to avoid the negroes, who inhabit the mountains, and murder travelers. Without him these honest folks would perhaps have carried off my tithes and Signor Don Francisco de Castro's gold watch: at the same time I had to pay him very handsomely for his trouble.

“Having arrived at Mexico, I went to wait upon the prior, who is called Father Athanasio, and delivered him my provincial's letter. Before he unsealed it he very respectfully kissed it. He read it to himself with attention, and I observed that while reading it, he appeared surprised and satisfied. ‘Father

Cyril,' said he, after having finished it, 'even though this letter were not from our reverend father provincial, it contains so handsome an eulogium on your merit, that I could not omit receiving you as a man sent by heaven to preserve the glory of our Order. We cannot sufficiently rejoice at your arrival: for in fact,' pursued he, 'the Jesuits have taken the wall in Mexico: that is certain. But I trust they will soon yield it to us: if this letter may be believed, you are about to deprive them of the prize of preaching.'

"I returned to this compliment a reply as modest as that was flattering; and after a rather long conversation, in which the prior evinced a very great impatience to hear me preach, I prepared to comply with his desires. I mounted the pulpit after a week, and from my very first sermon made a noise in the town. What shall I say to you? This noise is daily augmenting, in spite of those jealous of it, and I have become the fashionable preacher of the day.

Chapter Ninth.

What Don Cherubin and Father Cyril did after having mutually recounted their adventures.—Description which the latter gave of his prior.—Don Cherubin is received with pleasure.—What took place at his visit.

WHEN Father Cyril had finished his relation, I expressed the joy I felt at finding him, after so long an absence, so honoured and esteemed in the capital of Mexico. I congratulated him on the success of his sermons, without telling him what I thought of them, or rather by telling him what I did not think; for I praised him even so highly as to call him Cicero's orator, a thing for which some reader may reproach me. "Signor Bachelor," he may say, "we ought to flatter no one, and particularly our friends." Agreed: but I reply that it is not necessary to be unseasonably sincere, and that it is better to approve of the praises which one's friend receives, than to tell him bru-

tally that he deserves them. Besides, Father Cyril had taken his mould, and my candor would not have been less useless than indiscreet if I had undertaken to give him advice.

When I had complimented him on his reputation of being a great preacher I asked him if he was content with his prior's behaviour to him.; "Is he properly sensible," said I, "of his happiness in having you? How does he act towards you?" "The best in the world," replied the Biscayan. "I have every reason to praise Father Athanasio : he honours me with his confidence; he consults me, and causes me to enter into a thousand little details which prove he has a friendship for me. Moreover, he never invites any party in which I am not included. If he regale seculars in his apartment, he sends for me to help him to do the honours of the table with my conversation, which, without vanity, is not of the dullest. If he go to visit the nuns, I am his companion. In a word, I partake of all his pleasures."

"As far as I see," replied I, "this Father Athanasio appears a virtuoso." "Without doubt," replied Carambola. "To give you a portrait of him, I will first tell you that he is not yet two and forty years of age. For his person, he is one of those portly friars, whom one cannot see passing along the street without admiring their good mien. The ladies of Mexico are delighted when he visits them. Besides that he has a most amusing wit, he may be said to be one who sings well, and is thoroughly acquainted with music. Moreover, he has a talent for poetry, which ought not to pass for nothing. I must," continued he, "make his reverence known to you." "You will do me pleasure," said I: "such a monk appears to me to be a very desirable acquaintance." "Very well," said he, "I will do it for you immediately." At the same time he took me by the hand, and conducted me to the apartment of Father Athanasio. While going there, I said to myself, "Let us now see whether the prior of the Jacobins of Mexico, be as well off for furniture as the guardian of the Cor-

deliers of Xalapa. I ought not to doubt it: Saint Dominick is richer than Saint Francis."

In effect, Father Athanasio had a floor of eight or nine rooms, all ornamented with pictures and magnificently furnished. The most beautiful ornaments of Mechoacan feathers shone on all sides. There were seen tables covered with silk and beaufets ornamented with vases of the finest porcelain of China or Japan. In short, my eyes were dazzled by the beauty of all that struck them, and which would have certainly done honour to the palace of a cardinal. We found the prior amusing himself with singing and touching the strings of a lute. "My reverend father," said my conductor, "your reverence will allow me to introduce to you one of my best friends, Don Cherubin de la Ronda, the illustrious governor of the young Count de Gelves, son of the Viceroy." Father Athanasio, on my friend Carambola's account, showed me all imaginable politeness. He even regaled me with a collation, during which he talked of nothing but music and concerts.

This friar gave me by these means to understand which was his accessible side; and making my attack accordingly, "Reverend father," said I, "my friend has praised your voice to me in such terms as have inspired me with a violent desire to hear you sing: I can hardly believe that he has not overdone his praise." "You shall judge for yourself," replied the prior, modestly. "You have reason to mistrust Father Cyril: besides that he has a great friendship for me, he is not very sensible to harmony." At these words he rose to take his lute, and without ceremony began playing, singing at the same time a song of which he had himself, he informed us, composed the air and the words. In this song a lover was complaining of a cruel mistress, and essaying to soften her by touching expressions. It was amusing to see how the friar entered into the spirit of the song, and vented the most tender sounds, rolling his eyes at the same time with the languor of a lover, making a most singular contrast with his religious habiliments and emblems of mortification.

"Signor Don Cherubin," said Father Cyril, when the prior had done singing, "you see what are the innocent recreations of his reverence. What do you think of his voice? Do you not perceive in it an infinite softness, and would it not be a murder not to exercise it?" I took care not to tell him, in reply, that the voice of the priest and monk ought to be devoted to the praises of the Almighty, because persons who preach to others are not fond of having sermons addressed to themselves; on the contrary, I approved very highly of the prior's amusements. I made him repeat his song, telling him that I was charmed with his voice, his music and his poetry. I did not, however, fail to impart to Father Cyril, in private, my opinion on this subject. He took the part of his prior, and to make the apology of the American monks in two words, said, "If the monks of this country have not faces which speak of mortification, be not therefore prejudiced against them: they are not the less virtuous because they have not an air of hypocrisy."

After spending the rest of the day with these two friars, I left them with a promise of returning occasionally to see them, and begging them to honour me with their visits when their affairs should call them to Mexico.

Chapter Cxvth.

Don Cherubin goes to see the penitents of the desert, and recognizes among them Don Gabriel Monchique, the seducer of Donna Paula.—Of the conversation which these two cavaliers had together, and how they separated.—Impression made on Don Cherubin's mind by the recital of the manner in which his wife had been carried off.

ONE evening, being in company where the conversation turned upon the beauty of the environs of Mexico, it was stated, and every one agreed in the opinion, that the most agreeable of all was that which is called the Solitude of the Desert. As I had never yet been there, though I had frequently heard the place highly praised, I resolved to go thither the following day along with Toston, who was no less curious than myself to see this spot. We accordingly repaired to it, mounted on two mules from the stables of the Viceroy. In a very short time we had com-

pleted the three leagues, the distance between the town and this solitary abode, which well deserves to be described. It is a mountain environed with rocks, and on which there is a convent built by the barefooted Carmelites, to retire to as to a hermitage.

There are at the base and all around this mountain a number of chapels, all of which have gardens filled with flowers and fruits. There even run from the rock in many places, fountains, which, together with the shade of palm trees, render this Solitude delightful. The interior of each of these chapels is ornamented with paintings in fresco, which represent the different kinds of torments suffered by martyrs: and as if it were not enough to expose to the view of the world scourges, hair shirts and other instruments of mortification, to intimate the life of penance led in this desert, there are also to be seen in each of the chapels a kind of hermits, who are employed in lacerating their skin with rods of iron wire; a great attraction to the people of Mexico, who are as fond of horrid spectacles as the English themselves.

These self-scourged penitents pass for saints. I considered them with admiration; and having observed that several of the spectators gave them money in order to be remembered in their prayers, I was desirous of imitating them, and with this intention approached a chapel, to present a pistole to the holy personage who was there flagellating himself with great severity: but imagine what was my astonishment at recognizing in this miserable hermit, all disfigured as he was, Don Gabriel de Monchique, the seducer of Donna Paula. I doubted at first the evidence of my eyes, and said to Toston, "Examine that penitent attentively: do you not recognize in him the features of the perfidious Don Gabriel? Is it an illusion?" "No, Sir," replied he, "you do not deceive yourself; it is indeed your enemy: I cannot mistake, though he is so covered with blood as to make the recognition barely possible."

While I ran my eyes over this miserable wretch, the sight of whom, while it awakened my vengeance, forbade me to gratify it, he placed himself by my side. As soon as he

knew me, he threw to the ground the scourge with which his cruel hand was armed against himself; and presenting me his breast all covered with blood, "Don Cherubin," said he, "strike; revenge the outrage which I have committed on you: far from wishing to screen myself from your blows, I entreat them as a favour; by piercing my heart you will deliver me from the remorse with which I am eternally tortured, or rather, from the furies, which for the last two years have incessantly pursued me." "What have you done with my wife," cried I, hastily interrupting him: "what has become of her? Speak, wretch; inform me of her situation." "Donna Paula is no more," replied he: "a month after our flight she was snatched from me by death. Scarcely had I tasted the fruit of my crime, ere heaven punished me for it. If you would know more," added he, "enter my chapel, and I will inform you of all you can desire to learn: it is also due to justice that I should vindicate Donna Paula, who was not culpable." Thus addressing us, he drew Toston and my-

self into the chapel, and continued in the following terms:

“Listen to me, Don Cherubin; I am about to make you a faithful recital of the seduction and rape of your wife. When I had formed the design of winning her, I gained over by means of presents, her old attendant Antonia, who informed me that Donna Paula loved you too sincerely to become unfaithful to you. On this, instead of renouncing my silly love, as I ought to have done, I abandoned myself to it in such a degree that I did not hesitate to avail myself of an amorous philtre which was made known to me by an old apothecary of Alcaraz, and which was, he informed me, composed of the powder of a certain bird whose species exists in some part of America. As I put no faith in such things, which I treated as mere chimeras, I doubted very much of its success; yet no sooner had Antonia administered some of this powder to her mistress in a cup of chocolate, than the charm operated.

“As soon as I was apprised of this I took my time and arranged my measures so well,

that at the beginning of a very dark night I left Alcaraz with Donna Paula and her servant, unseen by any person about the place. We arrived before day at the village of Villa Verde, distant about two leagues, where we concealed ourselves in the castle of a gentleman with whom I had contracted an acquaintance, who was a relation of Don Ambrosio de Lorca, and consequently an enemy to Don Manoel and yourself. This gentleman pleased himself with the idea of lending us an asylum, and of favouring an action which would dishonour you both. We remained about a fortnight in our retreat, without entertaining any apprehension from your perquisitions, since we were with a cavalier whose domestics were all discreet and faithful. After this, taking the road to the coast near Carthagena by night, we arrived at a small port, and embarked on board a vessel which I had freighted for Genoa, my own country, where I proposed to conceal my prey ; but heaven, tired with the profligacy of my life, would not permit the accomplishment of my design : Donna Paula

fell ill and died on the passage, in spite of all that could be done to save her.

“This melancholy event,” continued Monchique, “induced me to look into myself. I reproached myself with my crime, of which I now saw all the enormity, and took a resolution to expiate it, if possible, by devoting the remainder of my days to the rudest penance. Arrived at Genoa, I sold with this design all my effects, and this is the use I made of the money I by that means obtained: I gave a part of it to old Antonia to enable her to go and mourn in an establishment of female penitents, the part she had acted in the seduction of her mistress; I paid and dismissed my servants, and after having distributed the rest of my property to the poor, I set out from Genoa in the habit of a hermit, determined to stop in the first wood or place which might appear to me adapted for the residence of an anchorite; and that I speedily found.

“But, Don Cherubin,” continued he, “I believe it is not necessary to tell you more, nor to relate to you by what means I was brought from Italy to Mexico; in that you

can have no interest : enough that I have revealed that which is connected with your own affairs ; and I think I have said sufficient to excite your vengeance. Plunge, then," added he, presenting me his breast, "plunge your sword into the heart of a miserable wretch, who can only appear a very monster in your eyes." "No, no," replied I, "whatever injury you have done me, I cannot resolve to revenge myself by assassination. I choose rather to leave you in this desert, that by long and rigorous penance you may obtain the mercy of heaven."

So saying, I left the chapel and resumed the road to Mexico, my mind filled with the most serious reflections upon this adventure. They were of a melancholy kind, when I considered that Donna Paula had not swerved from her duty but through the means of a most detestable artifice, and was therefore excusable in what had happened. Nevertheless, there arose in my mind a secret joy when I remembered that by her death I was placed in a situation to aspire to the possession of Donna Blanca. As for Toston, who found in

this adventure nothing but what was calculated to inspire joy, his ideas were all of a pleasing kind. When he saw me lamenting over the fate of Donna Paula, he talked to me of Salzedo's daughter: and, all things considered, both on the part of joy and grief, the former preponderated.

Chapter Eleventh.

Don Cherubin stops in a village on his return from the desert.—An unexpected rencounter which takes place there.—History of a parish priest and a pilgrim.—Who this pilgrim was.—Astonishing effect of personal resemblance, and extraordinary generosity of the priest.

I WAS returning with my valet from the desert, and had my mind still full of what I had been told by Don Gabriel de Monchique, when I had a rather singular rencounter, which dissipated for a time the melancholy in which I was plunged anew, on reflecting on the tragical end of my unfortunate wife, whom I pitied from the bottom of my heart. Stopping in a village, or rather in a small town, to rest the horses, I was surprised by the sight of a great number of persons assembled round the door of the parsonage, as I judged the house to be, as it immediately joined the church. I desired Toston to go and inquire

into the cause of the tumult. He accordingly went, and returned in a moment after, crying out like a madman, "Oh, Sir, a most laughable adventure has just taken place: the curate of this parish has recognized his wife in the habit of a pilgrim to whom he was giving alms, and these people are waiting to see her come out."

My valet again bust into laughter about this event, and begged me to stay like the rest, to see what would be the result. I, however, ordered him to be silent, not choosing that he should make a fool of himself in a village where it was probable I might be known. I fell into reflection on this subject. What a difference, thought I, is there between this man's fortune and my own. I have lost a wife, without the slightest hope of ever seeing her again, while the priest has met with his at a moment when he had not the slightest expectation of it. Curious to be informed of this history more in detail, I made my way through the crowd and desired to speak with the curate. They at first made some difficulty about admitting me, but my dress and equipage

catching the attention of those who came to open the door, my request was ultimately complied with. On entering, I saw in a rather large sized saloon, all the principal people of the village assembled round a venerable pastor, whom they were endeavoring to persuade that the pilgrim was not his wife; and that she even did not know, and had never seen him.

I approached the pastor, who was in absolute despair that the pilgrim would not acknowledge him. He arose as I advanced, and, finding no doubt my countenance prepossessing, entreated me to listen to him; and this I readily assented to, addressing to him at the same time, some few words of consolation calculated to inspire him with hope. He received my compliments with his eyes full of tears, and replied, "My misfortune, Sir, is this: it is now about fifteen years since, traveling with my wife, whom you see here surrounded by my friends, and who now disowns me, we encountered a dreadful storm: our vessel was shattered into a thousand pieces, and I should have fallen a vic-

tim to the fury of the winds and waves, but for the peculiar interposition of Providence. After having been long tossed about the surge, which one moment gave me to see the very depths of the ocean, and at another raised me to the skies, I had the good fortune to discover an empty boat which like myself was driving at the mercy of the storm. I got into it. Although all was dark, I by accident discovered a pair of oars, which I immediately seized, returning thanks to heaven ; and without an idea of which way I was going, continued rowing for two or three hours, until I at last perceived that the sea had grown more calm, and that my boat was aground. While awaiting the day, I put up a thousand prayers to heaven for the safety of my wife and two children who had embarked with me. Scarcely had the morning dawned, ere my surprise was excited at finding myself in a harbour filled with numerous vessels : doubtless, Providence had conducted my boat and watched over my days. Some sailors who perceived me from afar, came to my assistance : they were much astonished

at seeing me escape from such a furious tempest; they pitied my situation, and lent me some articles of dress, for which I gladly exchanged the wet clothes I wore.

“Saved from this frightful peril, I entered a church, and offered up my heart to God. I was firmly resolved never more to embark on board a ship. I deeply regretted, however, the loss I had sustained of a wife who was so dear to me, and of two children whom I tenderly loved. After inquiring of a number of travelers whether there was any news of the vessel called the Shepherd’s Star, and having heard that all had perished, and that I was the only person who had escaped from this cruel wreck, I traveled from port to port, with money which I made of some jewels which remained in my possession, and two rings which I had upon my fingers. Hearing no intelligence whatever of my wife, I came to the resolution of devoting my life to the service of God, since I could never be sufficiently grateful to him for the mercy he had shown me. I resumed my studies which I had not yet forgotten, and some

time after entered into a seminary. In about four years I entered into holy orders, perfectly to my satisfaction, and after having some time served this parish, was appointed its pastor. I have now been here six years, and this morning, while giving alms to this pilgrim, I thought that in her features I could recollect those of my wife. The surprise I felt at the moment caused me to utter a cry which brought all my people around me. The pilgrim, terrified at this accident, not knowing to what cause to attribute it, came herself to my assistance. Recovering my senses, and looking more closely at this woman, I caused all the rest to retire, and when alone with her, asked if she were not the daughter of Don Bardo de Mendoza. She admitted that she was, and inquired in her turn, how it happened that I knew anything about her. I embraced her, and told her that in me she beheld her unfortunate husband, Don Raxas, escaped by the mercy of God from the fury of the waves. But judge of my astonishment, when, withdrawing herself from my arms, she told me that I was

mad, and that she had never been married. She would then have gone out, but I stopped her, and her cries have been the means of attracting the people of the village to my door. Am I not most unhappy," continued the good priest, "not to be recognized by one who was dearer to me than the world? Gentlemen, I appeal to your judgment."

Curious to see the end of this adventure, I told the curate that prudence should forbid him to divulge this matter out of respect to his own character, and that it was requisite to act with caution under such circumstances; that, if he would permit me, I would go and speak to this pilgrim in private, and might by that means discover who she was: to this he consented, and desired that we should be left together. I accordingly approached the woman: but what was my astonishment at recognizing in a pilgrim's dress, Nise, my earliest love. She was no less troubled at the sight of me, and inquiring by what chance I came there, I told her what had been said about her, and that curiosity had induced me to enter the curate's house. I exhorted

her to tell me the truth. She replied that it was true she had never been married, and that she was the daughter of Don Bardo de Mendoza. I asked what was her Christian name. She told me it was Theresa Nise, and that finding herself unable to continue at service in consequence of a malady with which she had some time been afflicted, she had taken the resolution of asking charity in the habit of a pilgrim; that she had made up her mind to that course, and that it had afforded her subsistence. "But had you not a sister?" asked I. "Alas! yes," said she: "but having been separated from her in my earliest infancy, at which time she was married, I am ignorant in what part she is, or whether she be still alive." I asked her sister's name. "Francisca," replied she. "That is enough," said I, leaving her. I then returned to the curate, who, as soon as he saw me, demanded if this woman were really his wife? I answered that I did not believe she was, and that her resemblance to his wife had surprised him, and struck upon his imagination. "What," I asked, "was the name of

your wife?" "Donna Francisca," replied he. "Well then," said I, taking him by the hand, "come hither, and in this pilgrim, embrace your sister-in-law, Donna Theresa Nise." "My sister-in-law! Is it possible," cried the priest, rushing towards her, "that you should be Nise, of whom my wife has so frequently spoken?" The pilgrim assured him it was so, and I confirmed her story, stating that I had formerly known her. To this effect I related to them where I had seen her, saying nothing, however, of the share which she had had in my affections. But what was most convincing of all, was that our pilgrim drew forth a register of her baptism from a small box which she had by her side, and showed it to the priest, who could now no longer entertain the slightest doubt of the truth, and once more embraced her as his sister-in-law. After being apprised of her circumstances, he told her that they should in future live together, and be only separated by the tomb. The news immediately spread in the village that the pilgrim was the priest's sister-in-law, and that her

great resemblance to her sister had been the cause of the mistake.

This adventure appeared to me too singular not to afford it a detail among my memoirs, and I think that my readers will not be displeased with me for having inserted it. I took my leave of the priest, who would not allow me to set out before I had partaken of a frugal collation to which he invited me; by which means I had an opportunity of witnessing his excessive joy, at seeing a sister who had been hitherto unknown to him. His eyes were full of tears, and when he looked at Nise he could not help sighing incessantly at the recollection of his wife. I was much moved with this spectacle, and if I were delighted at seeing the turn which the affair had taken, I was still more so at the generosity of the worthy pastor. How many are there far more rich than he (his revenue amounting to less than two hundred crowns per annum) who leave their relations in the extreme of indigence, while they have it in their power to relieve them by taking

them to their homes, or at least by aiding them to subsist.

The priest, curious to learn to whom he had been speaking, asked who I was. I did not conceal my quality from him, and he consequently evinced the greatest respect for me. He begged me to permit him to come and see me, to which I readily consented. His conduct in taking his sister-in-law into his house appeared so praiseworthy in my eyes, that some time after I procured for him, through the medium of Don Juan de Salzedo, a rich benefice a few leagues from Mexico, in the direction of Petapa, worth two thousand crowns a year.

The curate never ceased to thank me, and manifest his gratitude for the favour. I have mentioned here the end of this story, because it will not be again adverted to in the course of these memoirs. When I left him I perceived that the good curate's housekeeper looked with an evil eye upon her new hostess: she was the only person who appeared chagrined at the event. I returned with Toston to Mexico; and had my brain so occupied

with this adventure, that I related it, immediately on my arrival, to Don Juan Salzedo, and totally forgot to mention that in which I was infinitely more interested, and which I afterwards resolved not to omit acquainting him with the next morning.

END OF PART FIFTH.

PART SIXTH.

Chapter First.

Don Cherubin, on his return to Mexico, gives Don Juan Salzedo an account of his journey.—Of the joy which the secretary felt, at finding him in a situation to become his son-in-law.—Of the new employment which he obtained for him, and the good advice which he gave him.

I WENT in haste to Salzedo, to inform him of the unexpected rencounter which I had had, and which I had forgotten to give him and an account of on the evening before. I accosted him with an agitation which gave him to see beforehand that I had some interesting news to announce to him. "What is the matter, Don Cherubin?" said he, "that you are so agitated? has anything extraordinary happened to you?" "Yes, Signor," replied I, "and you have little notion of the

astonishing recital I am about to make you." At the same time I gave him a detail of what had passed in the desert between Monchique and myself.

Don Juan heard me without interruption ; after which, embracing me with transport, "How agreeable to me is this news!" "cried he. "The obstacle which opposed the repose of my life is then removed. Nothing can now prevent us from joining the ties of blood to those of friendship. I am at the height of my wishes. In talking to you thus, I suppose that for my daughter, *tuum semper sauciat pectus amor* : for if, since you have refrained from seeing her, your heart has become engaged elsewhere, it would be melancholy for her to have a husband, whose affections she would not possess."

I protested to Salzedo that I had not changed my sentiments, and hereupon he again promised me the hand of Donna Blanca. I returned him, as may be supposed, the thanks which I owed to a man who, while he had in his power to marry his

daughter to some lord of the court, or to some contador mayor, did not disdain my alliance, or rather sought it with as much ardour as if he would have derived considerable advantage from it.

I expressed my gratitude to him in terms which gave him to understand that I was still more touched by the affection he evinced for me than by Blanca's dowry, great as it was. "I am persuaded," replied he, "of the sincerity of your sentiments; and if I only consulted my own desires, you should be in less than a week the husband of my daughter, but a reason which I will state to you, obliges me to defer this marriage for some months. Don Alexis will soon put on the virile robe—I mean that he will no longer have a governor. I wait for that time in order to procure you a more important post than that which you now hold, and, permit me to say, more worthy of a cavalier who is to be my son-in-law.

"In the mean time," added he, "I permit you again to see my daughter as before, and to hold with her such conversation as is con-

sistent for two persons, who are on the point of binding themselves together by everlasting bonds.' I did not neglect this permission. I revisited Blanca, who, receiving me as a lover who had the consent of her father, conceived a little affection for me, at the same time that she inspired me with a great deal for her.

I was anxious to know what new place my destined father-in-law wished I should possess, in order to render me worthy of the honour he was desirous of doing me; when he, one morning, entered my room with an air of gaiety. "My son," said he, (for he no longer called me by any other appellation) "*albo dies notanda lapillo!* You are no longer governor of Don Alexis. This young lord is now master of his actions, and you are my colleague. The Viceroy, to recompense the care you have taken of his son's education consents that you should take a part in my, labours, and share with me the title of principal secretary to the Viceroyalty. It is a favour which I have asked him, and have just obtained. Do not tell me, that, not feeling

competent to acquit yourself well of the employment, you have a repugnance to accepting it. Let not my functions frighten you: there is no black art in the case. To fill my place, regularity and good sense alone are requisite. Be under no uneasiness on that subject: I will soon qualify you for the most difficult duties."

Upon this assurance, I lost all at once the aversion I hitherto entertained for offices, and told Salzedo that truly my incapacity frightened me, but since he was not alarmed, I would do what he desired, assured that he would assist me with his advice, or to speak more justly, that he would guide me by leading strings. As soon as he found me determined on doing as he desired, he conducted me to the Viceroy, to whom he presented me as his colleague and his son-in-law. His Excellency approved his design of associating me in the ministry, and of giving me his daughter Blanca in marriage, not thinking, said this nobleman, in a very obliging way, that he could find any person more proper than myself to become his son-in-law and his

substitute. After this flattering discourse, the Count told me that he exhorted me to take my father-in-law for a model; a thing which he might very well have dispensed with recommending to me, as he knew that I was well acquainted with Salzedo's merits.

"My lord needed not to have persuaded me to walk in your footsteps," said I to the Secretary, when we had quitted the Viceroy. "Who but you, could I have proposed to imitate? what guide could better than yourself, conduct me in the path which you have opened to me, and on which I do not enter without trembling? Alas! I fear that I have a capacity too narrow to admit of my fulfilling your design." "I repeat to you again," replied Don Juan, 'the matter is much easier than you imagine. I have only one advice of the last importance to give you. Be accessible, obliging, and give every one a good reception. An air of gravity does indeed become a person at the head of an office, but there should be in it nothing of pride. Gravity and foolish pride, says a Castilian author, are two sisters who very much resemble each other, and

who may, notwithstanding, be distinguished: the one repays the politeness which is shown her, the other is rendered by it, only the more insolent.

Chapter Second.

Don Cherubin de la Ronda shares the functions of Salzedo, and acquits himself perfectly well.—He marries Donna Blanca.—Tragical history of three Indian brothers.

As soon as I was declared colleague of Don Juan de Salzedo, the clerks of all the offices of the Viceroyalty, came in haste to pay their respects to their superior; and I received abundance of visits, the greater part of the gentlemen and principal citizens of Mexico having come to see, and form an acquaintance with a man whom they knew to be the most particular friend of Salzedo, and designed to be his son-in-law.

In the commencement I went on only step by step, and did nothing without having first consulted my oracle, that is to say my senior, who taking a pleasure in instructing me, with which I was enchanted, daily increased my taste for business. I applied myself to it with so much ardour, that I had soon no need of a

guide. After three months' practice it would have been said, that I had all my life applied to nothing else but what I was then engaged in. It is true, that I devoted my whole attention to copying my model; and I succeeded so well, that I was called in the town, by way of excellence, Salzedo's ape. I know not whether I did not surpass my original in the art of receiving with politeness those persons who had recourse to our ministry. It is at least certain, that Don Juan had nothing to reproach me with on this score. On the contrary, he said to me one day, having seen the politeness which I used to a simple citizen, "Very well, my son; very well: that is the reception to be given to all who apply to us. Whether their requests be granted or refused, we ought always to send them away satisfied with our manners."

I was, then, without the fault which is often the property of principal secretaries, and sometimes even of the lowest clerks; I did not act the petty minister. I will say more; I joined to my mild and civil demeanour, an obliging heart. I did all the services I could,

and principally to unfortunate persons, who came to implore my support. By this I acquired the reputation of an honest man, and gained the esteem and friendship of the whole town.

My colleague applauded himself for his work. He was delighted to see me so well justify his choice; and the time at which he proposed to give me his daughter having arrived, he caused me solemnly to espouse her in the cathedral of Mexico, in presence of the Count and Countess of Gelves, and all the officers of the Chancery. The principal gentlemen of the town were also present at this ceremony, and among others, my friend Don Andre Alvarade, and Don Josef de Sandoval, both of them descended in a direct line from those brave captains of Cortez, who rendered their names so celebrated. There was also Don Christoval, the grandson of the famous Garcias Holquin, who seized the canoe and person of King Cuahutimoc, successor of Montezuma. In a word, the most distinguished cavaliers were at our nuptials; forming a brilliant assembly. Blanca and I, after

having received the nuptial benediction from the hand of the Archbishop, returned to the palace, and our wedding was celebrated with splendour during three days: feasts, balls, concerts and plays, everything was resorted to to render it magnificent.

When the rejoicings were concluded, I applied myself to business still more closely than before, and my lord soon became so well pleased with me, that he made scarcely any difference between the father and the son-in-law. He consulted us both on the important orders he received from court, and sometimes it happened that my opinion prevailed over that of Don Juan, who, far from showing himself jealous, appeared delighted at it.

The Count placed great reliance in our advice, but he did not always follow it; and when he had taken a thing into his head, neither one nor the other of us could turn him from his design. I must relate an instance of his obstinacy, from which may be seen what kind of man this nobleman was. He learned one day that in the province of Mechocacan, there were three Indian gentlemen,

brothers, who dwelled on the borders of a river, in some parts of which gold was found, not unknown to them, since it was ascertained that they had trafficked in gold dust with a merchant of Seville. The Count de Gelves, prompt to seize the opportunity of augmenting his riches, sent some Spanish soldiers into the country of Mechoacan, with an order to carry off the three brothers, and bring them to Mexico; which was executed with as much exactness as diligence. The Indians were put into the prison of the palace. The Viceroy interrogated them himself. They denied that they had any knowledge of the parts of the river where it was pretended there was gold. To engage them to the discovery, they at first used mildness and fine promises, afterwards threats, and even torments. All was useless; they could not obtain their secret.

If his Excellency would have been prevailed on by Salzedo and myself, he would there have stopped. He would have sent these unfortunate men back to their country, and contented himself with having used them ill. Such was our advice, which, notwith-

standing, judicious as it was, was not followed. The Viceroy, unable to forego the hope of obtaining gold from these prisoners, took the resolution of writing to the court to inform the prime minister of what had passed, and to ask him what should be done with the three Indian gentlemen. The Duke de Olivarez, thinking he had already twenty tons of gold dust, returned a speedy answer to the Count de Gelves, and ordered him without ceremony to have the three brothers beheaded, if they persisted in keeping silence.

Although this order appeared cruel to the Viceroy, he did not fail to prepare for the bloody execution, notwithstanding all that my colleague and I could say to him, to prevent him from staining himself with the blood of three men who only persisted in silence, because, perhaps, they had nothing to reveal. He opposed us by two arguments to which we were obliged to yield. In the first place, he knew the character of the Count Duke, a proud minister, and one who wished to be obeyed without remonstrance: then he was working upon him, to continue him in his post

some years beyond the term of his commission, which was near expiring; for he had now been four years governing Mexico, the Viceroyalty of which is but five years, but is sometimes prolonged to ten by means of presents which the Viceroy sends to Spain, both to the prime minister and the members of the Indian Council.

When I saw the three unfortunate victims of the Count Duke's and the Viceroy's avarice menaced with a speedy death, I had compassion on them. "My lord," said I to his Excellency, "before the blood of these unfortunate Indians be shed, let us put address in practice, since the torture has been unavailing. I know a Jacobin who is very eloquent, and who speaks the Indian language very well, I think if he were to see the prisoners and to have some interviews with them, he would succeed in getting them to discover what they now conceal with so much obstinacy." "I approve of your idea," said the Count, "and nothing ought to prevent us from following it. Go instantly in search of this monk, and bring him to me: if he can succeed in this

business, he has only to be assured that I will get him a bishoprick." I immediately got into my carriage and proceeded to the convent of the Jacobins, saying to myself as I went along, "God be praised! if my friend Carambola could become a bishop it would be laughable enough."

"What brings you here?" said Father Cyril, as soon as he saw me appear. "Is any thing here for your service?" "The business is rather connected with your's," replied I, "since it concerns a mitre which it is desired should be placed on your head." "I hope you will explain yourself," said he, "for I do not understand you. I do not think myself of the wood from which bishops are made, although persons of our order are every day raised to the episcopal dignity. I made known to the monk the motive of my visit, and on what condition it was promised that he should become a prince of the church. "Oh, I have not got the mitre yet," said he, shaking his head: "what is expected from me is not easy to be performed." "You deceive yourself, Signor Carneades," replied I, laughing; "you

who possess the happy talent of persuading, you who speak so well the Proconchi language : you fear to be unable to induce these prisoners to comply with the intentions of the Court to save their lives !" "Yes," replied Father Cyril, "I fear that I shall not be able to accomplish it: you do not know the Indians. There are some of them so firm in the resolutions they have taken, that the most cruel execution cannot frighten them. If these have agreed among themselves to die rather than discover what they desire to conceal, it is in vain to indulge the hope of forcing them to it. I will, nevertheless," added he, 'make the proof to content the Viceroy ; but I much doubt of his Excellency being well satisfied with the event."

I conducted the Jacobin to the palace, and presented him to the Viceroy, who said to him, "Father, you understand the nature of the business. Don Cherubin has of course fully acquainted you with it; and as he has very much praised your eloquence to me, I have every reason to flatter myself that you will induce these three Indians to break the

silence which they are so obstinate in maintaining, and which will prove fatal to them if they do not attend to your remonstrances. See them, I intreat you ; converse with them in their own language ; and proceed if possible, so that they may obey the orders of the King in pointing out the parts of the river in which there is gold. Represent to them that, without this indication, their ruin is certain ; instead of which, if they make it with a good grace, I shall be grateful to them for it, and will confer on them great favours. As to yourself, Father," added he, "be assured that if you succeed, the Court will be mindful of your services." "My lord," replied Father Cyril, "I am disposed to second your zeal for the King's service, and I will spare nothing to satisfy your Excellency ; but I have already told Don Cherubin, I know not if my exhortations will have the effect you promise yourself."

At the same time our Jacobin, to show that he desired nothing more than to contribute to the accomplishment of the Count's desire, or rather to be a bishop, had himself conducted to the prison where the three Indians were

shut up, and remained with them four hours. His lordship and myself both drew a favourable omen from so long a visit, and we could not imagine that the Indians would be mad enough to prefer death to life. However, we deceived ourselves. The member of the Petapa Academy returned to us with a mortified air. "These unhappy men," said he, "are not capable of hearing reason in the despair which possesses them. I have in vain exhorted them to comply with the will of the Court; my discourse only served to irritate their fury. They persist in maintaining that they are ignorant whether there be gold in this river in which it is pretended that it is found, and they add that if they did know it, they would not acknowledge it, to punish the avidity of the Court and the Viceroy." "Very well," said his Excellency, irritated at the firmness of the prisoners, "they shall perish, since they desire to appropriate to themselves the riches which belong to the King."

These words of the Count's were followed by a sentence of death which he pronounced against them, in conformity to the sanguinary

order of the Court, and that without opposition from the judges of the Chancery, though these officers are entitled to oppose the unjust designs of the Viceroy ; a circumstance which is doubtless to be attributed to their fear of displeasing the minister, with whose vindictive spirit they were acquainted.

A scaffold was therefore set up in the market-place, on which the eldest of the three brothers was first made to mount. They were accompanied by Father Cyril, who exhorted them in Proconchi to satisfy the Viceroy, while the executioner stood by with a large cutlass in his hand, of which he studied to make the steel sparkle in the eyes of the unfortunate men whom he menaced : but the Indian viewing with an eye of firmness the preparations for his execution, and more fatigued than moved by the exhortation of the monk, hastened to offer his throat to the executioner, who inflicted on him the mortal blow.

The second was immediately brought forward, whom the monk would have persuaded that he ought not to follow the example of his elder. " Useless talk !" said the Indian,

who spoke a little Spanish. "My friend," pursued he, addressing the executioner, "do thy duty quickly: consummate the unjust and barbarous work of thy superiors." At these words, he laid his head on the block, and the executioner severed it from his body.

There remained to be executed only the youngest of the three brothers. He had no sooner appeared on the scaffold, than there arose a murmur among those who were present, who were very numerous; and this murmur was the effect of the general compassion which the sight of him excited. It is certain, that it was impossible to contemplate him without pitying his misfortune. He was a youth of about twenty at most, well made and of good mien. The ladies, who are naturally compassionate, pitied his youth, and wished that he might not imitate his brothers. All the spectators put up prayers for him to Heaven. For my part, I expected, and my lord flattered himself with the hope that this young Indian would lose his firmness on seeing the steel raised over his head, and the bodies of his brothers extended on the scaffold. Even

Father Cyril, in spite of the knowledge which he had of the resolution of the Indians, did not despair of snatching this one from his fate; and to this end, redoubling his efforts, he exhausted the most eloquent discourse with which his book of Academical collections supplied him: but he was not more fortunate in this enterprise than he had been at Guatemala in the affair of the Abbess's election; for when the young Indian saw on the ground the heads of his two brothers separated from their bodies, he gathered them up in a transport of rage, and kissing one after the other, "Wait," cried he, in his own language, "wait my dear brothers; I am about to follow you. Death has nothing but charms for me, since it is about to reunite me to you." The Jacobin, judging by these words that this furious man was determined to perish, ceased to exhort him to live, and abandoned him to the executioner, who struck off his head.

The market-place immediately re-echoed with a cry of horror. The populace burst out in confused murmurs. They pity these three Indians, and their judges are accused

of injustice. It is certain that this event did little honour to the Count de Gelves and the prime minister; but I believe that these two noblemen were less mortified at having unjustly caused the death of three gentlemen, than at having committed a bad action to no purpose. As for Don Juan Salzedo and myself we were really afflicted at it, as was also little Father Cyril, who returned to his monastery as one who had lost a bishoprick.

Chapter Third.

By what accident Toston all at once made his fortune, and of the laudable resolution which he took shortly after.—Don Alexis parts without regret from his Creole, Toston's wife.

ON the day after this tragical event, one of a more joyful nature happened in the palace. Blandina finding that Don Alexis had abused her weakness for him, confided in Toston the secret of her situation, and that domestic immediately informed the Vice-Queen.

This lady appeared as much astonished as if she ought not to have foreseen the accident. "Ah, my friend!" cried she, "what is it thou tellest me? this news pierces my heart. I should never have thought Blandina capable of forgetting herself so far." "Madam," replied Toston, "you know that a tender engagement goes farther than is calculated on. When the mistress is softened and the lover

very warm, reason and virtue easily lose their influence over them."

"Ah, feeble Blandina!" resumed the Countess, "what hast thou done. Oughtest thou to have allowed my son, liberties which are only permitted to husbands? But why reproach thee with it? It is to my imprudence alone that thy misfortune must be attributed. Alas! it is I who have ruined thee in exposing thee to the peril under which thou hast fallen. After this tirade of dolorous exclamations, I should be inconsolable," pursued she, "if there were no remedy for this evil. Happily there is one: yes, doubtless, it is a certain mode of saving Blandina's honour. We have but to marry her quickly to some honest man, to thyself for instance: thou appearest to me to be suitable for her." "Madam," replied Toston, "I thank you for the preference."

"Thou hast reason to thank me," cried the Vice-Queen; "learn, my friend, that thou wilt be doing no bad business in uniting thyself with Blandina. In the first place, this Creole is very pretty, and I will give her a large dowry; with that I promise thee a con-

siderable employment, and, what ought not to pass for nothing, my protection." "Candidly, Madam," said Toston, with much vivacity, "you dazzle me: I must be an enemy to my fortune if I were to refuse a similar establishment. The business is done; I am ready to preserve the honour of Blandina at the expense of my own."

The Vice-Queen, charmed to see the young man in these sentiments, made haste to get him united to the Creole, whose honour, in consequence of this marriage, received no taint, for no one was astonished to see a valet-de-chambre to Don Alexis marry an attendant of the Countess. The best thing for the husband in this precipitate match was that he touched a thousand Spanish pistoles, which the Vice-Queen caused to be told out to him. Add to this, three thousand crowns which he received from me for services he had rendered me.

When this domestic saw himself so well supplied with money, he took an inclination to return to his own country, and carry thither his wife, of whom he had long been enamoured,

and more beloved by her than Don Alexis; so that he might flatter himself, as well as the young lord, with being in reality the father of Blandina's child. He communicated his design to me. "Sir," said he, "though the residence of Mexico is perhaps the most beautiful on the habitable globe, I have resolved to leave it, to go and see once more my country and my parents. My father, who, as you know, was a schoolmaster in the village of Alcaraz, is still alive, as well as my mother; if, at least, death has not carried them both off since our separation. They are not rich, and you will of course judge that the return of a generous son who has made his fortune will be very agreeable to them.

"Besides the pleasure which I propose to myself," continued he, "in rendering their circumstances more easy, I feel that I shall not have less in carrying news of you to Signor Don Manoel de Pedrilla, your brother-in-law and friend, who must be in mortal impatience to hear something of you." "It is not to be doubted," replied I; "Don Manoel loves me too well not to be in pain about me; and,

on my side, I should be unworthy of his friendship, if I were longer to delay informing him of the happy situation in which I am. It is accordingly my design to make him acquainted with it as early as possible, by a letter which shall contain an ample detail."

"No, no, Sir," interrupted Toston, "that is a charge which I take upon myself. I shall better inform them by word of mouth than you can by a letter, of all that has happened to you since your departure from Alcaraz. Besides, I shall be able to reply to the questions which they may desire to ask, and you need not doubt they will ask me an infinite number." "It is certain," replied I, "that a report from you will be preferable to the longest dispatch; but I fear one thing: Don Alexis will not consent to the departure of Blandina." "Oh, yes," returned Toston, "this nobleman's love has considerably relaxed; he begins to detach himself from the Creole; and, walking in his father's steps, in spite of all we have been able to do, he is taken with the sight of an Indian coquet, whose acquaintance one of his pages has procured him."

I am delighted that he is grown inconstant, for, without vanity, Blandina has a greater liking for me than for him. She will readily abandon Mexico to follow me to my own country, where we shall live at our ease, bringing up the little family which her fecundity promises."

In reality, Don Alexis, very far from wishing to retain his Creole, received her adieux with an unmoistened eye: but in default of the grief which the young ingrate ought to have had at losing a person who had had so much kindness for him, he made her a present of some jewelry. After this, Toston having taken charge of the dispatches which I gave him for Don Manoel and my sister, set out with Blandina for Vera Cruz by the muleteer's road.

Chapter Fourth.

Of the confidence which Don Juan de Salzedo reposed in his son-in-law, of a project formed by the Viceroy.—What this project was, and how it was executed.—The Archbishop of Mexico takes the part of the people, and excommunicates Don Pedro and the Viceroy.—Violence which this last resorted to, in having him conducted to Vera Cruz.

HAD my father-in-law been ever so little inclined to jealousy, he could not without pain have seen the gentlemen press as they did for my friendship in preference to his own ; but he was a man who took pleasure in seeing me esteemed and honoured by every one. Perhaps also, in attributing to the consideration they had for him that which they manifested to me, his vanity might find its account. However this be, he loved me as if I had been his own son. He had no secrets with me, and sometimes he confided to me matters of great

importance. This is one, of which he one day informed me :

“The Count de Gelves,” said he, “begins to lose the hope of getting his government prolonged. One of his friends, a courtier, well informed of the measures which several noblemen are taking at Court to obtain the Viceroyalty of Mexico, informs him that the Count Duke de Olivarez has directed the King’s choice to the Marquis de Serralvo. Another, less avaricious than the Count De Gelves,” continued he, “would console himself, and return satisfied to Madrid with the fish he has caught : but he cannot moderate his views ; he is desirous of making one good cast of his net. He expects by raising the price of salt that he shall gain immense sums ; and, in order to throw on another the public odium which this monopoly must excite, he has in hand a man born for executing such enterprises : this is Don Pedro Mexio, one of the richest gentlemen in Mexico, and perhaps the most audacious of mortals.

“I esteem his lordship,” pursued Don Juan, “and cherish his glory and honour too much

to applaud his design when he communicated it to me. I combated it, like a sincere friend and zealous servitor ; but, although the Count commonly listens to me and follows my advice, I can tell you there are occasions, like this, on which he will not be contradicted ; he is determined on executing his project, whatever may be the consequence of it." Thus spoke my father-in-law, and then asked what I said to this project. "I say," replied I, "that it makes me tremble, and that it may have consequences very disagreeable for his Excellency and for us." "That is what I fear," replied he, "and I am much mortified that I cannot prevent them." Salzedo and I, then, disapproved of this enterprise, and we were in despair when we beheld preparations making for executing it. I will detail in what manner the undertakers of it commenced this work of iniquity. The reader will see by the event the truth of the proverb *la codicia quebrá el saco*.*

Don Pedro Mexio, according to the agree-

* Covetousness bursts the bag.

ment made between the Count and him, bought up all the salt he could find for sale in the country, and filled the stores which he had hired with that intention. By this means salt grew scarce, and became every day dearer. Don Pedro then beginning to sell his own, daily augmented the price, so that the poor began to complain and the rich to murmur; and so much the more, as both classes knew what to think of this dearness. They did not confine themselves to complaints and murmurs. A petition was presented in the name of the people in general, to the judges of the Chancery, demanding that salt should be reduced to its former price: but the Viceroy, who was at the head of these judges, of whom the greater part dared not be of an opinion different from his, gave them to understand that this dearness would not last long, and that they must have patience. Thus, no one having the boldness to oppose his avarice, Mexico was suffered to continue his plunder at his ease.

At last, the people tired at seeing no end to the monopoly, implored the assistance of the Archbishop, setting forth in a memorial

to his lordship, that he ought to interpose his pastoral authority, to preserve his flock from the tyranny of Don Pedro. The pastor, touched with their distress, or to speak more justly, urged by a secret hatred to the Viceroy, seized this opportunity for mortifying him, under the specious pretext of solacing the people. He resolved to employ the censures of the church against Mexio, knowing that this would be indirectly attacking the Count. This violent prelate was named Don Alonzo de Zerna. He was the son of an hidalgo of New Castile. He had obtained, I know not how, the archbishoprick of Mexico, which is worth sixty thousand crowns of rent, and proud of the possession of so rich a benefice, he thought himself at least equal to the Viceroy. /

Don Alonzo, to vex his enemy, excommunicated Don Pedro, and fixed his excommunication on the doors of all the churches, that no one might be ignorant of it. Mexio only laughed when he was informed of it. He derided the Archbishop, and to let him see how little value he set upon his excommuni-

cation, he continued to sell his salt, and even raised the price. This boldness did not fail to irritate the impetuous prelate, who, on his side, listening to and following nothing but his own boiling humour, pushed his resentment so far as to interdict Divine service.

Nothing is more considerable in New Spain than this interdiction. It is, as one may say, to sound the tocsin to apprise the people that the house of the Lord is on fire; for, from the moment it is published, the doors of the churches are closed; no more masses, no more prayers are said in them; it is a general suspension of all the ecclesiastical functions. Rightly to conceive the importance of this formidable censure, it must be known that there are more than a thousand priests in Mexico, both regular and secular, who subsist only on masses, which they say at a dollar a-piece; which daily amounts to more than a thousand crowns, and this the excommunicated person has to pay.

Don Pedro, rightly judging that the Archbishop wished to ruin him, by rendering him odious to the people, and perceiving, besides,

that they began to insult him in the streets, lost part of his firmness, and retired to the palace to entreat the Viceroy to protect him, since, after all, he had only complied with his orders. On this, the Count de Gelves sent the greater part of his servants to tear down from the doors of the churches the excommunication and interdiction papers, which were there put up. He then caused the superiors of convents to be told, that he ordered them to open their churches and perform masses, under penalty for disobedience. But the monks replied, that on this occasion it appeared to them they ought rather to obey their pastor than the Viceroy. On their refusal his Excellency called me and said, "Don Cherubin, go immediately to the Archbishop, and tell him from me that I order him to revoke his censures."

I repaired in haste to the archiepiscopal palace, and made known my commission to the prelate, who told me bluntly, that he could not do what the Count commanded, until Mexio, the disturber of the public peace, should have previously submitted to the

church, and reimbursed the priests in the sums which he had been the cause of their losing. I wished to represent to his irritated lordship, that he did not reflect it was disobeying the King to refuse submission to the orders of his minister; but the furious Don Alonzo haughtily interrupted me: "Hold your tongue, my friend," said he; "I have no need of your remonstrances. I know what I owe to a Viceroy who makes so bad an use of his power, and who would deserve to be treated like Don Pedro." I did not deem it seasonable to reply, whatever mind I had to do so, and retired for fear of being myself excommunicated.

The Viceroy, who was scarcely less violent than the Archbishop, was transported with rage when I informed him what the prelate had said to me; and, giving way to his first impulse, called the captain of his guards. "Tirol," said he, "I order you to go and seize the person of the Archbishop, in whatever place he may be, the immunity of the church itself not being worthy of respect on this occasion. Conduct this priest to Vera

Cruz, and place him under the castle guard, until he can be embarked for Spain."

Whilst Tirol was assembling his people to execute the order of his Excellency, the Archbishop was apprised of it. He immediately left the town, and took refuge in the suburb of Guadaloupe, accompanied by several ecclesiastics. He there made out himself an excommunication, which he charged one of his priests to have stuck up on the door of the cathedral. Then, having learned that he was pursued, he took refuge in a church, where he had the candles lighted on the altar, and dressed himself in his pontifical robes, too fully persuaded that in this state no man would dare to lay his hand on him. But he was soon undeceived. Tirol, at the head of his people, entered the church; and having respectfully approached the prelate, begged him to hear read the King's order, of which he was the bearer, and to submit to it quietly, to avoid scandal. Upon this our Archbishop began crying out that the privilege of the church was violated, and took all his priests to witness the outrage that was done him.

Nevertheless, after having stoutly declaimed against the Viceroy, he took off his habiliments, and gave himself up to Tirol, who immediately conducted him to Vera Cruz.

Chapter Fifth.

Of the melancholy consequences which arose from carrying off the Archbishop of Mexico. The Viceroy is obliged to retire to the Monastery of the Cordeliers.—Don Cherubin, his wife, and his father-in-law, retire there also.—Don Cherubin sets out from Mexico.

DON Juan and I were afflicted at this seizure of the Archbishop, foreseeing that it would have disastrous consequences. We had spies about, who rendered us an exact account of all that was said in the town, and we had reason to judge by their reports, that the inhabitants did not approve of the conduct which the Count had pursued, and even that they pronounced him in the wrong.

We soon learned that the ecclesiastics, above all, were animated against his Excellency; that they diffused among the people a spirit of revolt, and excited the Creoles, the Indians, and the Mulattoes, the secret enemies of the government, to begin the sedition.

Insensibly the number of the malecontents increased to such a pitch, that it seemed the whole town had taken part against the Viceroy. His servants could not appear without exposing themselves to insult. Even Salzedo and myself had our share in the hatred of the people, who imagined, doubtless, that we had a part in the monopoly of salt. In short, everything announced approaching sedition, which the return of Tirol to Mexico caused to burst forth. The first who raised the buckler was a priest, who seeing this captain passing on horseback through the market-place, took it into his head to cry out, "There goes the man who dared to lay his impious hand on the minister of the Lord."

At the voice of this priest the populace were roused: they assembled and pursued Tirol with stones as far as the palace, where he, fearing a general insurrection, ordered the gates to be closed. The precaution was not unnecessary, for the affair became serious. In less than a quarter of an hour there were in the square more than six thousand persons of all conditions, who, loading Tirol with

abuse, began crying, as in emulation of each other, that he ought to be exterminated.

Hitherto the seditious had only made a noise; and the Viceroy believing that to appease them he had only to send and request them to retire to their houses, assuring them that Tirol had escaped from the palace by a back gate, charged me with this commission, the honour of which I would willingly have yielded to another, and of which I notwithstanding, acquitted myself boldly enough for a man who exposes himself to be stoned; which I expected to happen to me, for having shown myself at a balcony, for the purpose of addressing the mutineers, I saw a shower of missiles fall around me, of which happily none took effect. As nothing but blows were to be gained by preaching reason to these madmen, I wisely retired, and by my abrupt retreat, avoided the fate of the Emperor Montezuma.*

Things did not rest here. Some priests having joined the party, irritated the fury of

* This prince was killed by the blow of a stone, as he was addressing his subjects from a balcony to induce them to lay down their arms.

the malecontents, some of whom being armed with fusees, began firing at the windows, and made the balls whistle about the palace, whilst others with levers began battering down the wall to gain admittance. During five or six hours which this tumult lasted, a page and two of the Count's guards who appeared at the balconies with their carbines to return the fire of those without, had the misfortune to perish, after having themselves brought down some of the seditious. We should have made a great carnage among them if we had had some pieces of cannon; but there were none, either in the palace or the town, the Spaniards having no apprehension of being attacked by foreign nations.

In default of cannon, the Count de Gelves ordered the royal standard to be displayed on the balconies, and the trumpet sounded to call the inhabitants to the succour of the King, of whom he was the representative. This was unavailing, since no one of his friends or of the officers of the Chancery came to his assistance. However, the night approached, and the malecontents awaited it with impa-

tience to increase the disorder. As they had observed that the gate of the prison could easily be forced, they burst it open, or rather the gaoler opened it to them. They set the prisoners at liberty, who joining them, assisted them to set fire to the prison, and burn a part of the palace. Then the principal inhabitants, fearing that the town would be reduced to ashes, came out of their houses, and, for their own interest, appeased the populace. They got them to extinguish the fire ; and but for that, Mexico would have had the same fate as the city of Troy.

But if they had authority enough to prevent the mob from burning the palace of the Viceroy, they had not the power of preserving from pillage all that nobleman's effects. A part of his furniture was carried off, and, to secure the safety of his person, he was himself obliged to take refuge with his wife and son in the monastery of the Cordeliers, who were the only monks not among the number of his enemies. These fathers assigned him a commodious lodging enough in their convent, which is of vast extent. This con-

sisted of the apartments belonging to the provincial of the order, who was not at that time in Mexico. It was a large corps de logis, which contained several suites of apartments very small and very plainly furnished, excepting where his reverence slept. For this last it was composed of five or six rooms, and it may be said of it that nothing was there seen which spoke of religious poverty.

Salzedo, Blanca, and I joined the Count in the convent the same night. His lordship's principal domestics and our own also came there; and in short we were all provided with lodging, some well, some ill. On the morrow, at the break of day, my lord sent for my father-in-law and myself to deliberate with us on what was to be done in this melancholy conjuncture. "There is no other course to take," said Don Juan, "than promptly to send a man of spirit and confidence to the Duke de Olivarez to inform him of this revolt; and I do not think you can make choice of a person better calculated for executing this commission than Don Cherubin." I am of your opinion, Salzedo, said the Count: "Don Che-

rubin must immediately set out for Madrid: it is impossible to use too much haste."

The Viceroy employed the whole of the day in preparing dispatches for the Court, and giving me instructions; and on the morrow I took the route to Vera Cruz, with a valet-de-chambre and a lacquey. I left his Excellency, the Countess, Don Juan, and my wife in the convent of the Cordeliers at Mexico; and, making all possible haste, arrived at Vera Cruz, where I learned that the Archbishop Don Alonzo de Zerna had sailed for Spain two days before. As there is always in the harbour of this town a vessel prepared for the service of the Viceroy, I embarked on board it without loss of time, and set sail for Cadiz, where I arrived after a short and successful passage.

Chapter Sixth.

Don Cherubin having arrived at Madrid, goes to wait on the Duke de Olivarez, and gives him a detail of the insurrection at Mexico.—How the prime minister was affected by this report, and of the resolutions which were taken in consequence in the Council of his Catholic Majesty.—The Viceroy returns in triumph to his palace:—His disgrace.—He returns to Madrid. Don Cherubin and his family follow him.

I HAD no sooner set my foot on shore in Cadiz, than hastening to traverse Andalusia and New Castile, I was speedily at Madrid. I flew immediately to the prime minister, who gave me audience the moment my arrival was announced to him. I delivered to him the dispatches with which I was charged. He read them with the attention which they deserved, and seeing the Count de Gelves stated that I could instruct him in all the circumstances of the revolt, he failed not to demand

from me an ample detail. I obeyed him like one who was well prepared with his story. I will in good faith confess, that in my relation I did as much disservice as I could to the Archbishop Don Alonzo. I painted him in the blackest colours, and finished by throwing on the arrogance of this prelate all the blame of this fatal event.

The Duke de Olivarez read in full Council the dispatch of the Count de Gelves, and all considered the affair important. It was judged absolutely necessary to punish the most guilty of the rioters, in order to confirm in their duty the other provinces of America, the which, seeing themselves with regret under the yoke of Spain, might be tempted to follow the bad example of the Mexicans. It was decreed in Council that Don Martin de Carillo, a priest and inquisitor of Valladolid, should be sent to Mexico in quality of commissioner, to take the necessary informations, with power rigidly to punish some of the principal inhabitants, for not having pressed forward at the sound of the trumpet to range themselves under the royal standard. They resolved also to change

the officers of the Chancery, for having seen the Viceroy in danger, without taking the slightest step to bring him out of it.

With regard to the Archbishop Don Alonzo, it was in vain for him to solicit at Court; not one of the Council would undertake his defence, so much did they consider his conduct deserving of censure. They even deprived him of his rich benefice to make him Bishop of Zamora, a small diocese of four thousand crowns a year. It was in a manner from a bishop becoming a miller; but it was still thought that the Court showed sufficient consideration for the house of Zerna.

The prime minister, who was troubled at the sedition of the Mexicans, did not retain me long at Madrid. He speedily sent me back with a dispatch for the Viceroy. I returned to Mexico with Don Martin de Carrillo, whose arrival spread terror through that city. The citizens, feeling themselves for the most culpable, were in dread of punishment. Every body judged that the Court would make an example, and every one was trembling for himself or for his friends. But they were quit

for their fear; Don Martin reassured them, by declaring to them on the part of the King, that his Majesty, chusing rather to listen to his clemency than his justice, accorded them a general amnesty.

This declaration produced an admirable effect. The people, who everywhere change like the wind, were touched with the kindness of their sovereign, and cried, "Long live our good King Phillip! long live the Count de Gelves, his minister!" There might be seen those same rioters, who would have massacred this nobleman, running in crowds to fetch him from the monastery of the Cordeliers, and conduct him to his palace with acclamations and excessive demonstrations of joy.

The Viceroy, who hitherto had not left the convent since the time he had taken refuge in it, seeing he could now with impunity show himself in public, returned home, where (what afforded him an agreeable surprise,) he found everything in the same order he had left it when he went to the monks; for, by the greatest good fortune in the world, the gentlemen who had had power enough over the

populace to calm their fury and make them extinguish the fire, had, at the same time, had the precaution of having the palace doors guarded by the mutineers themselves, forbidding them to plunder, lest there should come orders from the Court which might make them repent it.

I forgot to say, that when, on my return from Spain, I was giving an account of my journey to my lord, he asked me one question: "How did the Duke de Olivarez receive you?" said he; "how do you consider him disposed towards me?" He gave me a most gracious reception," replied I; "and as far as one can guess the mind of this minister, he appears full of esteem and friendship for you. Moreover I can tell you, that I heard him pronounce your eulogium in terms" "So much the worse," interrupted the Viceroy with precipitation; "that makes me suspect him, as does also the letter you have brought me from him. This letter is too flattering not to alarm me. I do not know, but I have an idea that he wishes to put the Count of Serralvo in my

place, and I do not think I am influenced by a false presentiment." "You deceive yourself, perhaps," said I; "and the Duke rather thinks of prolonging your government." "I dare not," said he with a sigh, "I dare not flatter myself with such a hope. I expect no other than orders to recall me to Court."

In effect, three months after, there arrived from Madrid a courier, who placed in the Count's hand a packet from the Duke de Olivarez. The prime minister informed him that his Majesty, wishing to have him near his person, appointed him to one of the principal employments in his household, and had just named the Marquis de Serralvo for the Viceroyalty of New Spain. The Count de Gelves, then losing the hope of being continued in his post, took his part with a good grace. He now thought only of returning to Madrid with all his wealth, and of making preparations for his departure. On our part, Don Salzedo and I prepared to follow him with our small effects, which amounted to the worth of

two hundred thousand crowns. By this it may be judged how much his Excellency carried off. Finally we set out from Mexico; and it may be said, that the day of our departure we presented a spectacle to the Americans, which gave ample scope for their curses. The wags, at seeing two hundred mules loaded with bales of goods, made themselves a little merry at our expense, and we repaired with their money to Vera Cruz.

We now awaited in this town the arrival of the new Viceroy, to embark on board the vessel in which he should arrive. As soon as he disembarked, the Count and he had a conversation together. During two days they held repeated conferences on the affairs of New Spain; after which they separated with more politeness than friendship, one of them proceeding, meagre enough, to Mexico, and the other returning well fattened to Madrid.

Chapter Seventh.

In what manner the Count de Gelves was received at court.—His visit to the prime minister.—The Duke de Olivarez makes him grand Equerry.—Of the course taken by Salzedo and Don Cherubin.—One becomes steward, and the other secretary to the Duke de Gelves.

WE now set sail for Cadiz, and if we had met on our way some large vessel from Algiers or Salee, as occasionally happens, the rencounter would have been fortunate for its crew; but we had the happiness of completing our voyage without meeting any ship of unfavorable omen. Arrived at Cadiz, we remained there no longer than was necessary to put ourselves in a state for proceeding to Madrid, to which we proceeded by easy journeys. We alighted at the Hotel de Gelves, in the Square of Servada, near the church of Our Lady of the Peace. It is not the best in the town, but it is commodious, and we found

ourselves more comfortably lodged there than we had been with the Cordeliers in Mexico.

On the morrow after our arrival, the Count went to wait on the prime minister, by whom he was received with distinction. He took him into his closet, and embracing him in a manner which displayed esteem and friendship, "You doubtless," said he, "think that it is I who desired to put the Marquis de Serralvo in your place; but learn that you are mistaken. If you have not been continued in your post, you have nobody to blame but yourself; it is your own fault. All the Council were no less unanimous in blaming your conduct than that of the Archbishop; and as that prelate had been punished, they have deemed it necessary to punish you also, in order to satisfy the Mexicans, who have the affair of the salt at heart.

"I dared not," pursued the Duke, "undertake your defence; far from doing so successfully, I should but have incensed the council against you. But if I have not been able to get your government prolonged, I have at least obtained the King's consent to

your filling the place of grand Equerry, and this ought to console you for the loss of a place which has not been unproductive to you during five good years." The Count de Gelves, mistrustful as he naturally was, took the minister's word; and imagining that he owed him nothing but thanks, vowed an eternal attachment to him, and became one of his best friends.

The Duke then conducted him to the King, to whom he said, on presenting him, "Sire, I bring you one of the most zealous of your servants, and of all Viceroys him who has perhaps best known how to make your royal authority respected in the Indies. He comes to thank your Majesty for having honoured him with the office of grand Equerry, with which he is so much the more pleased, as it will procure him every day the happiness of seeing his master." The young monarch gave the Count de Gelves a reception of the most flattering kind; and as he was very curious, did not fail to ask him a number of questions about the Mexicans, and, among others, the following: "Count," said he, "is it possible

that among the Indian women, there are any sufficiently attractive to merit the notice of Europeans?" Our Viceroy reddened at this question, imagining that his Majesty asked it with a malicious motive, and to reproach him for his taste for the blacks. "Sire," replied he, a little agitated, "there are some among them who may be looked upon without horror; but after all, the prettiest of them ceases not to be a disagreeable object to eyes accustomed to the beauties of Madrid. If the Countess de Gelves had heard her spouse talk thus, I believe she would not have answered for his sincerity.

The Count de Gelves having entered upon his office of grand Equerry, augmented his household by the addition of several officers, though he had before a number sufficiently large, and spared nothing to make a figure at Court becoming his rank. As for Don Juan Salzedo and myself, we begged that we might be allowed to quit him, and establish ourselves as private gentlemen in Madrid, having, thanks to his bounties, enough to support us honourably; but this nobleman refused his

consent to our wishes. "My friends," said he, "let us not separate. I have too much accustomed myself to the pleasure of being in your society, to consent to your leaving me. Condescend, I entreat you both, to take a part in my affairs. Let one take upon himself the administration of my rents, and the other be my secretary."

It was impossible to refuse, and we accordingly yielded to his solicitations, and accepted the offices for which he had designed us. Rich as I was, I would willingly have foregone this secretaryship ; but I accepted it out of compliance to Salzedo, who being too much attached to this nobleman to refuse his request, was very glad at the same time to retain near him his daughter and his son-in-law.

Chapter Eighth.

Don Cherubin meets Toston at Madrid.—Of the interview he had with him, and the disastrous adventure which happened to Toston.—Don Cherubin renders him an important service.

I HAD another reason also for acting as I did: Blanca had paid her court so well to the Countess de Gelves, that she had become her favourite. The Vice-Queen would have been in despair at losing her; and my wife on her side, delighted with this lady's attention to her, repaid her with the most lively and sincere attachment. This was the principal reason which induced me to sacrifice to the Count the pleasure of being master of my time.

As my employment did not occupy me much, I led an agreeable life enough. I went almost every morning to the King's levee, to see the concourse of noblemen who came to pay their court to the monarch; and in the

evenings in St. Jerom's Meadows, I had the pleasure of contemplating the ladies, among whom I found many who appeared to me fully equal to those of Mexico. One day, as I was just going out to this promenade, I was not a little surprised at meeting Toston in the street. "How," said I, "is it thou? what art thou doing in Madrid? I thought thee in Alcaraz." "My dear master," replied he, "you know that our projects do not always succeed. I had proposed to return to my own country, there to pass with Blandina, the rest of my days; but heaven has not thought fit to allow me that satisfaction. I happened to meet at Cadiz a Gabriel Monchique, who carried off my wife, without my having it in my power to oppose him."

"Is it possible," cried I, "that this misfortune has happened to you. Recount to me, I entreat you, in what way it occurred." "It is a recital," replied Toston, "which I shall make you in a few words. On disembarking at Cadiz, it happened to me for my sins, that I went to lodge in St. Francis Street, at the sign of the Pelican. There was in this inn a

young English Captain, whose ship was at anchor in the Bay. As soon as this rogue saw my wife, he was taken with her, and forming the design of robbing me of her, it was thus he executed his intentions: he took good care not to betray his passion, lest I should suspect and disappoint him by changing my lodging, which I should not have failed immediately to do; and he affected so sober a demeanor that I was astonished at it. 'Is it possible,' said I to myself, 'that a naval officer of that nation should be so mild and polished in his behaviour?' This Captain, whose name was Cope, offered me a thousand little civilities, without appearing to take the least pleasure in seeing Blandina, and, in fact, scarcely looking at her at all. I was the dupe of this manoeuvre. I treated him with corresponding politeness, and we supped together the first day, as familiarly as if we had been the best friends in the world.

"Cope, while at supper, asked me from what part of Spain I came? 'From the village of Alcaraz,' replied I, 'near the province of Murcia.' 'That is fortunate,' replied the

Captain. 'I am to sail in two days from Cadiz for Alicant. I will land you, if you please, at Vera, which I believe is not far from your home.' I accepted this offer with joy, imagining that I could not do a better thing, and returning thanks to heaven for having afforded me so fine an opportunity of speedily returning to my own country. I therefore carried Blandina two days after on board Cope's vessel, and he received us with manners so open, that I congratulated myself on having made such a good acquaintance. 'Come,' said he, when we were fairly out at sea, 'let us live well. I have an ample supply of all kinds of eatables, and some excellent wines. Let us be always at table: that is the way to prevent the voyage from growing tedious.'

"You know my weakness," continued Toston; "I love a sprightly life. Captain Cope had no difficulty in persuading me to drink, and I got as drunk as a German. While I was in this pretty state, he had me carried on shore by his sailors, who left me on the ground extended at my length. There I lay in a

profound sleep ; from which awaking about sunrise, and seeing nothing of a vessel, I had abundance of leisure to reflect upon the politeness of the Englishman, whom I cursed with so much the more reason, as he had in his power, together with my wife, the coffer in which was all my money, and I was left with only twelve pistoles, which I had in my pocket. I thought myself still fortunate that the sailors had not robbed me even of this sum, to repay themselves for the trouble of bringing me on shore, and abandoning me to Providence.

“Not knowing where I was, nor in what direction to turn my steps, I followed at hazard a path which conducted me to the village of Alzira near Gibraltar, from whence I proceeded to the city of Ronda. I here reposed myself two or three days : then, instead of going to my parents, to whom I was no longer in a state to be useful, I took the route to Seville on a hired mule, with a resolution to go again to service, if I could meet with a master who would suit me. I did not find one, and judging that it was at Madrid I must

seek him, I took the road to this town, where I have again become a lacquey, after having been valet-de-chambre to the son of a Vice-roy."

"I am sorry for you my friend," said I, when Toston had finished his recital, "and I am still more concerned for the misfortune of Blandina. What an unhappy adventure for her! I can conceive the grief with which she must have been seized, when sensible of the treason of the perfidious Cope. Perhaps she actually died of regret." "No, no," replied Toston, "Blandina is not a woman to imitate those heroines of romance, who, when they find themselves in the clutches of corsairs, chuse rather to die than yield to their desires. I know very little of the Creole, or Cope had not much trouble in prevailing on her; and I do not believe, between ourselves, that he wanted any Colibri powder to triumph over her virtue."

"What is it you tell me?" cried I. "By this account it appears that Blandina is a jilt." "Past a doubt," replied Toston. "I suspected it at Mexico; but she converted my suspicions

into certainty on our voyage to Cadiz. There was among the passengers a young cavalier, who amused himself with ogling her; and I remarked more than once, that she replied to his advances with glances of invitation. In a word, she is a little personage, the care of whom would have given me abundance of trouble at Alcaraz, where the young cavaliers are distinguished for sprightliness and gallantry. In fact, I can console myself for the loss of her. I would only that Captain Cope had made a fair division with me, that he had returned me my coffer, and kept my wife."

"I am very glad, my child," said I, "that you are not more afflicted at this loss of your wife; and, in reality, you have not much cause to be so, if Blandina be such a character as you have described. As to my part, you may be assured that I shall refuse nothing which may contribute to place you in a state for performing your journey to Alcaraz, in a manner agreeable with your wishes. I am also persuaded that Don Alexis will not fail to pity your misfortune. He may probably take you

back into his service ; but perhaps you may be too much attached to your present master to be desirous of leaving him." " Oh, as to that, indeed, I am not," cried he, laughing. " My master, who is called Don Tomas Trasco, is an original, without a copy : he is a visionary who is possessed with a most laughable kind of fantasy. He says, and actually believes, that he has, like Socrates, a familiar spirit. ' My friend,' said he, ' when he engaged me in his service, know that a geni has taken a liking to me, and instructs me in all I am desirous of knowing. I have an interview with him every morning, and I warn you to retire when you hear us in conversation with each other ; for he chuses to speak to me without witnesses.'

" In reality, one morning when Don Tomas was in his closet, I heard him talking aloud, and imagined that he had some person with him. Not at all ; he was entirely alone. He was speaking to, and answering himself, conceiving that the geni was actually present." I burst out laughing at this most extraordinary portrait, and finally quitted Toston, after de-

siring him to come to me on the following day ; which he failed not to do, perfectly persuaded that he would be retained in the family. He first caused himself to be announced to the Countess, who did not refuse to see him. He related to her his misfortune, and she appeared to pity him, though in reality she cared very little about the matter. "My friend," said she, "we will do something for you. It is enough that you have eaten our bread, for us not to abandon you in your distress. Go and see my son : I doubt not that he is well disposed to serve you."

Don Alexis, to whom I had already spoken of him, and whom I had engaged to take him back into his service on the same footing as before, received him very well. "Welcome back, Signor Toston," said he, with an air of raillery, "how do you get on with Captain Cope ? He played you, I think, rather an ugly prank, but have patience ; perhaps he may send you back both your wife and money. Perhaps he has only served you so for a joke, and to try how you would bear it. Tell me

the whole : I like to hear you tell comic stories ; you acquit yourself admirably."

"And why, Sir," said Toston, "would you have me relate a story which you are already acquainted with, and which I cannot recollect without renewing my grief?" "Never mind," said Don Alexis, "you must absolutely tell it me; the detail from your own mouth will amuse me exceedingly." Toston, to satisfy him, complied with his wish, to the infinite diversion of the young lord, who interrupted him more than once to give way to the most immoderate laughter, as if the adventure had been the most pleasant in the world.

When Don Alexis was tired of diverting himself at Toston's expense, he resumed his gravity, and said : "Well, my friend, to console you for the loss which has happened to you, come and resume the employment about my person, which you had before your marriage. Be again my principal valet, and the depositary of my secrets. I shall soon give you something to do," added he. "I have a conquest in view, and I have need of your

advice to enable me to complete it." This speech highly rejoiced Toston, who that very day quitted Don Tomas and his geni, to reside in the Hotel de Gelves.

Chapter Ninth.

By what accident Toston met with his wife, when he had entirely forgotten her.—Account which she gives of the circumstances attending their separation.—Her justification.—Fresh change which this recital produced in his heart.—His affairs assume a better aspect.

DON Alexis, as soon as he arose the following morning, said to Toston, "You must know, my friend, that I have been making a very interesting acquaintance. I will tell you how. One morning when I was walking all alone on the Prado, I saw coming out of a house a lady covered with a veil, whose noble and majestic air prepossessed me in favour of her quality. She took two or three turns in the walk; and, perceiving that I was advancing towards her for the purpose of surveying her more conveniently, retired towards the garden to disappoint my curiosity; but, whether my haste prevented her, or whether

she was desirous of giving me time to join her, I was at the garden gate before her.

“‘Madam,’ said I, saluting her with respectful politeness, I must be extremely deficient in gallantry, if, meeting a person so charming as yourself, I omitted to testify to her the pleasure which the sight of her affords me.’ ‘Signor Cavalier,’ replied the lady ‘you are extremely liberal with your soft sayings. Far from refusing adoration to those ladies who are worthy of it, you have very much the air of one who offers it to those who do not deserve it.’ Upon this I answered, the lady retorted, and we separated after a tolerably long conversation.”

“Have you ever seen her since that time?” asked Toston. “No,” replied the young Count, “I have not, although I go almost every day to the Prado. If she have not come out of the garden since that day, it is in all probability because she is desirous of proving me, for, without vanity, I think she is satisfied with me.” “I cannot doubt it.” said Toston, “a cavalier of your figure is sure to please. What is her name?” “That

I do not yet know," said Don Alexis. "She forbid me to inquire who she was; and, for fear of displeasing her, I dared not take any measures to obtain that information." "The devil!" cried Toston, "you are a rigid observer of ladies' commands; but you must know that they sometimes find it convenient to be disobeyed. Faith, Sir," continued he, "you are still far enough out of your reckoning. I see very well that I must have a hand in this business, or it will turn out badly for you. Let us go directly to the Prado, and show me the garden from which you saw your princess come out: I require nothing more." Don Alexis took him at his word, and led him immediately to the garden gate.

When they had got there, Toston said to the young Count, "Leave me here, and return home; I will speedily rejoin you, and be assured that I will inform you who are the inhabitants of this house: we will then take our measures." Upon this assurance Don Alexis returned to the Hotel de Gelves, and his confident seated himself near the garden gate, waiting until perhaps some servant might

come out, from whom something might probably be learned.

He had been there more than an hour, when all at once the gate opened, and presented to his astonished eyes a young person whom he took for Blandina ; as, in effect, she it was who appeared before him. She immediately recollected him, and running to him transported with joy, threw herself into his arms and fainted. The bad opinion which he then had of the virtue of his wife prevented him from sharing in the delight which she experienced at this meeting. He thought that it was a pretence, and that the hussey was perhaps rather sorry than pleased at having found him. He did not, however, neglect the necessary assistance, and when she had recovered the use of her senses, "Is it you, my dear husband," cried she, "is it you whom I behold? you whom I thought at the bottom of the sea? you whom I believed to be numbered with the dead?" So saying she embraced her husband with manifestations of affection with which he would have been most sensibly touched if he could have believed

them to be sincere ; but, instead of yielding to this with a good grace, he gently repulsed his wife, saying, in a serious tone, "No tricks, Blandina. Wherefore all these transports of joy, or rather all these false demonstrations of affection ? Are you not about to tell me a finely invented tale, to make me believe that Cope foolishly relinquished his prey ? No, no, do not believe that I am credulous enough to place confidence in your assertion. Either you yielded to the solicitations of this Captain, or were at least forced to submit to his violence."

"Toston," replied the Creole, "listen to me without interruption ; I may appear before you without a blush. If my honor was exposed to imminent peril, know that it was proof against it. I will give you a faithful account of what took place between Cope and me, and you shall see that instead of betraying you, I carried my love of virtue even farther than Lucretia herself.

"You recollect," continued she, "that perfidious supper which the Englishman gave us on board his ship. While you were drinking

with him I retired to a small cabin, which he told me had been prepared for you and me, and slept there tranquilly till the morning. When I awoke, and found that you were not by my side, I arose to seek you. At this moment Cope entered my cabin, affecting an air of the most excessive sorrow. 'Madam,' said he, 'you behold me in despair; an accident has this night happened for which I shall never be able to console myself. Signior Toston, your husband, while leaning over the side in his drunken state, fell into the sea and was drowned. I shall never get over this fatal accident.'

"At this melancholy intelligence I made the vessel resound with my piercing shrieks. I tore my hair, I was like one mad. In the mean time our Captain, acting the part of a man in deep affliction, sighed, groaned, and seemed desirous of giving encouragement to my grief. He had during two entire days the patience to hear me utter my complaints and witness the flowing of my tears, without venturing to say anything to me in the way of consolation. On the contrary, the traitor irri-

tated my affliction by the regret he manifested at having taken you on board his vessel. He bitterly accused himself of having been the cause of your death, with which he was incessantly reproaching himself.

“But on the third day he deemed it time to throw off the mask ; and assuming a different character, ‘Beautiful Blandina,’ said he, ‘it is no doubt melancholy to lose a person whom one loves ; nevertheless, whatever reason we may have to mourn such a loss, it is better to listen to the voice of consolation, than obstinately to persist in grief. After all, at your age, the death of a husband ought not to give you so much uneasiness. Young and handsome as you are, you cannot long be in want of a new one : I am even sensible of having one to propose to you ; it is myself : if you have no aversion to my person, I am a candidate for the preference.’ I thanked Cope for the honor he intended me, and rejected without hesitation his proposal. Besides that he was not at all to my liking, I was at that moment in a disposition very unfavorable for a lover.

“The Englishman employed five or six days in making love to me very politely ; but judging that by so doing, he was taking the longest method of arriving at his object, he changed his courteous manners for the rough deportment of a sailor ; and I confess I then had need of all the resolution with which heaven inspired me, to be able to resist him. Fortunately for me, my opposition, instead of increasing his violence, caused it to relax. He suddenly passed from love to contempt. He ceased to torment me ; and, viewing me with a disdainful air, ‘For a servant maid,’ said he, ‘methinks you are extremely inexorable. Recover yourself, my love, I will not be indebted to violence for a victory which I despise.’ At the same time he caused me to be taken on shore by two of his sailors, whom he ordered to convey me to the nearest village, and there leave me. The men did not fulfill with perfect honour the commands of their Captain. They did indeed conduct me to the village, and then abandoned me ; but considering that I was a woman whom, in all probability, they would never see again, they

carried off with them the trunk in which our money was deposited.

“I had happily about thirty pistoles in my purse, and a large diamond on my finger. With such recommendations, assistance may be found in any place inhabited by man. The master and mistress of the village inn to which I had gone, took an interest in my misfortunes. I had no sooner related to them my story, than they pitied and offered me their services, with abundance of execrations on the Captain and his sailors. I inquired in what part of Spain I was. ‘You are in the village of Molina,’ replied my host,’ on the coast of Grenada, between Marbellin and Malaga, about twelve leagues from the city of Antequerra, to which I will, if you please, myself conduct you.’ ‘You will oblige me,’ replied I, ‘my design being to go again to service in the family of some person of quality, if I can there meet with any such who will engage me.’ ‘You need not doubt it,’ replied he; ‘Antequerra is a populous town, in which there are resident a great number of nobility. I have acquaintance there,’ added

he ; ' I know among others, a good lady who was formerly duenna in a house where I was servant : I will take you to her, and I am sure she will very soon obtain you a place.'

" I accordingly set out with my host, for Antequerra, and as soon as we arrived there, he went to see the old governante. He told her my unhappy story, at which she was so much affected that she said to him : ' Bring this unfortunate woman hither ; I offer her bed and board ; I espouse her interests ; I take her under my protection.' To suppress superfluous circumstances, this lady placed me with Donna Leonora de Pedrera, daughter of a gentleman of Antequerra, with whom, after the death of her father, I came to Madrid, to the house of Donna Helena de Toralva, her aunt, whose sole heiress she is.

" I have nothing more to tell you," continued Blandina. " I have given you an account of my conduct, and I think you ought to be satisfied with your wife." " I am perfectly so," said Toston, " and things being as you have related, it would be unjust in me not to be so. I will confess to you, (excuse my

- candour,) that I should not have expected so much resistance on your part ; but, between ourselves, the delicacy of Cope astonishes me greatly ; and it must be confessed, that if your tale be truth, it does not look very much like it.” “ I am perfectly of your opinion,” said she ; “ my escape was a narrow one.”
- “ That I am sure of,” returned the husband ; “ I was seized during your recital with a cold sweat, from which I have not yet recovered. Independent of the risk you ran from this Captain, you were scarcely exposed to less danger from the two rogues of sailors who conducted you to Molina. You were very lucky that they only robbed you of your money.

“ Come, then, my dear wife,” continued he, “ let us say no more about it. We, at last, have met together again, with the exception of property, much in the same state as on our departure from Cadiz. God be praised for it. What ought to console us, my child, is, that we are about to make a new fortune. The Count de Gelves has returned from the Indies with immense riches, and has been made Grand

Equerry. Don Cherubin de la Ronda, my old master, is his secretary, and I am once more valet de chambre to Don Alexis. As this young nobleman advances in age, he is furnished with more money for his pleasures; and as I have become administrator of his money, my place will be every day growing better."

"Is Don Alexis still gallant?" inquired Blandina. "More than ever," replied Toston: "he is at present enamoured of a lady whom he saw come out of this garden a few days ago, and this lady may very probably be Donna Leonora, your mistress." "It is she herself," said the Creole; "for she told me that one morning a cavalier accosted her in the walk, and that she had a long conversation with him." "And how," asked Toston, "did she appear to be affected by the said interview?" "Not unfavorably," replied the attendant. "I assure you that if he had another, he might succeed in obtaining her affections. Moreover I can tell you, I do not know whether my mistress be not afraid of again seeing this cavalier; she has not gone

out of the garden since the day she spoke to him, most likely lest she should meet with him."

"Fine news for my master," cried Toston, "I will carry them to him forthwith. I bid you not adieu, my dear Blandina, my faithful love, we shall see each other again. Remain with Donna Leonora; the interest of Don Alexis requires it. Second with your good offices the endeavours we are about in order to win her. After this conversation this couple separated, protesting on both sides that they pardoned fortune the trick she had played them, in consideration of the pleasure they experienced in meeting each other again.

Chapter Cxviii.

Continuation of the preceding chapter.—Blandina introduces her husband to her mistresses.—Their interview.—What was resolved on by Toston and his wife in favor of the young Count de Gelves.

TOSTON, before he returned to Don Alexis, came to inform me that he had found Blandina ; and after relating to me all the conversation he had with her : “ Well, sir,” said he, “ what do you think of that ? do you think that all she told me about Captain Cope is to be taken literally ? As for me, I tell you candidly, I do not believe it at all.”

“ It is true,” replied I, “ that one may doubt, without being thought particularly incredulous ; however, the best thing a husband can do in such a case, is to persuade himself that his wife has told him the truth : that is what I would do to rid myself of all uneasiness. But, my friend,” said I, “ you made no mention in your story of the child which

Blandina must have brought into the world, since she quitted Mexico." "Ah, truly, you bring it to my recollection," cried Toston; — "my wife forgot to tell me, and I to ask anything about it. When I see her again I will not fail to inquire about this child, though nature does but half speak to me in his favour."

Toston here took leave of me, saying, "Will you allow me, Sir, to leave you now, in order to wait on Don Alexis, who doubtless is expecting me with impatience? I shall delight him with the information I got from Blandina about his mistress." "Go, run my lad," said I; "when agreeable news are to be carried to a lover, one cannot make too much haste. I doubt not but Don Alexis will speedily place Donna Leonora de Pedrera among his conquests, since he has the advantage of your assistance and your wife's."

As soon as Don Alexis saw his confident, he hastily advanced towards him. "Well," said he, "have you discovered who are the inhabitants of the house from which I saw my divinity come out?" "I have done more than

that," replied the valet; "I have learned the name and quality of your goddess. She is called Donna Leonora de Pedrera, the daughter of a gentleman of Antiquerra, after whose death she came to Madrid, and is now living at the house you saw with Donna Helena de Toralva, whose niece and sole heiress she is."

"You have become very well informed in a short time," said the Count. "And I have not yet told you all," returned Toston; "I know, from good authority, that she has taken a liking for you."

"Hey! how the deuce," cried Don Alexis, "have you been able to discover even the sentiments of this lady? who could have given you the information?" "Chance," replied Toston; "that served me much better than my own ingenuity, if indeed it may be called a service, to have brought my wife unexpectedly to my eyes." "What say you?" cried the young lord, in surprise, "have you found Blandina?" "Yes, Sir, Heaven had the kindness to restore her to me, without my having asked the favour," replied the confident, "and, what is very fortunate for you,

she is waiting maid to Donna Leonora." "You enchant me," cried Don Alexis, in transport, "by informing me that Blandina is in the way to serve me. I am sure she will not refuse to carry a note from me to Leonora." "No, I will answer for that," said the valet; "and you may assure yourself of all the services which depend upon her interference."

The young Count de Gelves, profiting by the opportunity which thus presented itself of declaring his love to Leonora, wrote a letter which he charged Toston to get delivered to the lady. The confidant went accordingly on the following morning to the Prado, and there found his wife awaiting him at the garden gate. He accosted her with a gallant and affectionate air. "My dear Blandina," said he, "before we enter upon my master's affairs, permit me to converse with you a moment about my own. Yesterday, if you remember, you did not say the least word about the child with which you were pregnant, when fortune separated us, near Gibraltar." "Alas!" replied she, "my poor girl died almost in the

moment of her birth, a short time after I had entered into the service of Donna Leonora, and her death would have been infallibly succeeded by my own, had not the most particular care been taken of me; but my mistress, who had conceived an esteem for me, omitted nothing for my preservation. I owe my life to her; and, out of gratitude, have avowed eternal fidelity to her."

"You have done very properly," replied Toston; "such a mistress well deserves your love. Does she know that you have met with your husband?" "I have informed her," replied Blandina, "and she has permitted me to introduce you to her, which I will do immediately: follow me." So saying, she ushered him into the garden, and pointing to two ladies who were walking there, "These," said she, "are Donna Leonora and her aunt. Let us join them, and give them to see that I have not married a man ill-made or destitute of merit."

Thus saying she took him by the hand and conducted him to the ladies, and accosted them jocularly, "Ladies," said she, "here is

the husband whom I thought dead, and for whom I shed so many tears. Look at him, and tell me if you do not think he was worthy of them." "Assuredly," replied Donna Helena, "husbands less agreeable, are often deeply lamented." Here Toston made a profound reverence to the lady who had spoken, and cast his eyes towards the ground in respectful silence. "They are both well matched," said Leonora, "and I am very happy that Heaven has again brought them together."

Donna Helena, desirous of making Toston talk, said, "You are, then, with the Count de Gelves." "Yes, Madam," replied Toston, "I have the honour to be principal valet-de-chambre to Don Alexis, his only son." "And you are apparently satisfied with your situation," said she. "Very much so, Madam," replied he, "my master is a perfect cavalier: I know no fault he has. Although he is young, he possesses consummate prudence; he is wise without assuming the air of a Cato, and sprightly without being a coxcomb: he is a model of a young nobleman."

"Besides a thousand good qualities," he continued, "with which Don Alexis is endowed, he will one day be possessed of considerable wealth, the Count, his father, having amassed great riches in the government of New Spain. Happy the high-born maiden for whom his hand is destined."

Thus pronouncing his master's eulogium, Toston, the adroit Toston, carefully examined Leonora, and conceived that she took pleasure in listening to him, although she affected to hear him with an air of indifference. This observation encouraging him to go on in praise of Don Alexis, he drew so flattering a picture of him, that Donna Helena could not help saying, "But, my friend, you go beyond bounds, you exaggerate. It is not possible that the young Count de Gelves should have all the merit you ascribe to him." "Pardon me, Madam," replied he, with great effrontery, "he is a most accomplished person, an epitome of all that is amiable."

At this part of the conversation, they were interrupted by a page who came to deliver a billet to Donna Helena. She read it, and, as

it demanded an immediate answer, she went into the house in order to prepare it. Leonora followed her, leaving her attendant with her husband in the garden. This couple finding themselves alone, gave way to the laughter which they could no longer repress. "It must be confessed," said Blandina, "that you are admirably expert in drawing handsome portraits; but, between ourselves, they are not exactly likenesses." "I confess," replied he, "that I have flattered Don Alexis a little, but I do not think that that has done much harm. I am sure that your mistress is enamoured of my master already, for, though she did not tell me so, I dare be sworn you have told her that Don Alexis is the cavalier with whom she conversed one morning on the Prado." "It is true I did so," said Blandina, "and I will again privately speak to her about him. I will ascertain her mind, and inform you of it to-morrow." "Very well," said Toston, "and if by chance you find the lady disposed to receive a letter from Don Alexis, here is one containing a most elegantly conceived declaration of his love, and

in which I have myself had a hand." Blandina took charge of the letter, telling her husband that he might assure his master of all the good offices she could render him with Leonora. Hereupon they separated, with a promise of meeting again on the same spot the following morning.

They did not fail in their appointment. "Victory!" cried the Creole, "victory! I have spoken with my mistress about Don Alexis, and 'given her much about the same description of him as you did yesterday. She at first dissembled; but I attacked her in so many ways, that she could not help discovering her sentiments. 'Yes, my dear Blandina,' said she, 'I love Don Alexis; I have thought of nothing but him since the day I saw him at the garden gate; and all the good I hear of him serves to complete his conquest,'"

"Let us come to my master's letter," interrupted Toston; "did Leonora read it?" "With avidity," replied the attendant, "and we both admired it. You had reason to say that you had put your hand to it: I very plainly perceived it. This letter has made an

impression on my mistress." "Bravo!" cried the enraptured valet-de-chambre, "nothing could go better. Let us go forward with this business; let us contrive a nocturnal meeting between these two lovers. They want nothing more to make them irretrievably in love with each other. Get Donna Leonora to walk to-night in the garden, and I will bring Don Alexis thither: they will have a long interview, after which they will breathe of nothing but marriage."

Chapter Eleventh.

Interview between the young Count de Gelves and Donna Leonora.—Its consequences.—The Count de Gelves proposes an advantageous match to his son.—Second interview between the two lovers.—What passes at it.—Blandina's good advice.—Don Alexis follows it.—Who was the person whom it was wished he should marry.

BLANDINA approved of the design which was accordingly executed. The young Count de Gelves, accompanied by his confident, arrived between eleven and twelve o'clock at the garden gate, and was presently admitted by Leonora and her servant, who were awaiting their arrival impatiently. Don Alexis respectfully accosted the lady. She received him in the same way; and, after some compliments of pure politeness on both sides, they began to assume the tone of love. Toston and his Creole seeing them about to enter upon a

tender conversation, retired to talk in private of their own affairs.

Love, which renders hours so long to lovers when separated from the objects of their affection, by way of equivalent, causes them to pass with rapidity enough when they are together. It was already day ere Don Alexis and his mistress thought of separating. It was necessary for the confidant to remind them of it; a charge which was willingly undertaken by Toston, to whom the flight had not appeared so short as to his master. The two lovers parted at last with a promise of meeting again on the following night.

This interview, just as the husband of the Creole had predicted, increased their passion. As soon as Don Alexis was out of the garden he began to extol the charms of Leonora, particularly her wit; and did nothing but repeat the same all the morning. His mind was occupied the whole day with the pleasure he was to derive from his assignation in the evening, but before he could enjoy the promised happy interview, he was constrained to go through one of a less agreeable nature. The

Count, his father, taking him after supper into his closet, addressed him thus: "My son, I have an affair of the greatest importance to communicate to you: the prime minister, in proof of the sincere friendship he entertains for me, has told me that he wishes to have you married, and give you a wife from his own hand."

Don Alexis at these words was much embarrassed, and remained unable to speak. "How then," said his father, "does matrimony frighten you? Ah, when you shall know the person whom the minister proposes for you, you will feel no repugnance to fulfilling his wishes." The young Count, a little recovered from his embarrassment, replied, "My lord, I shall implicitly obey you in all things; but deign to allow me to represent to you that I feel an aversion to marriage. . . ."

"You are deceiving me," interrupted his Excellency, "you dissemble: I see well whence proceeds this dislike to the match proposed; your heart is otherwise engaged. Formerly entrapped by some she-adventurer, you would

make a point of honour of remaining faithful to her."

"No, my lord," replied Don Alexis, "I burn not with an unworthy flame. I love, it is true, and I seek not to subdue my love; but the object of my affections is not of a rank to make me blush for the sentiments she has inspired. If you will, I will inform you of her family." "I dispense with the information," again interrupted the father; "I have no curiosity to know the lady. I order you to renounce her. I will have no other daughter-in-law than her the minister has offered me; and know that she is a person who joins to extreme youth and beauty a noble origin and large estate. Go," added he, "go, and consult Don Cherubin de la Ronda, your governor, on the subject: I am persuaded that his advice will be conformable to my intentions."

The young lord immediately left the closet without making any answer, but instead of coming to me, he thought it more to his purpose to go and consult with Toston. He informed him of the violence which his father

wished to do to his feelings; and, after having complained of this tyranny, "My friend," said he, "what must I do to preserve my faith to Leonora? how am I to rid myself of this embarrassment?" "Sir," replied Toston, "the thing is not easy. My lord, your father, as you know, is confoundedly obstinate: he has resolved that you shall espouse the person proposed by the minister, and he will not be turned from his purpose. But it is not yet time to despair. Let us first exert our ingenuity. Dissemble; affect to consent to this marriage, while I invent some expedient to break it off." "Ah, Toston," cried Don Alexis at these words, which appeared, in some sort, to flatter his love with a dawn of hope, "if you can accomplish that object, there is nothing which you may not expect from my gratitude. Haste," added he, "let us fly to the rendezvous; I will inform Leonora of the misfortune which threatens us, will assure her of using every exertion to avert it, and renew the oath I have made never to be united to any one but her."

They both returned to the garden, where

Leonora and her attendant amused themselves, while awaiting their arrival, with conversing on the good qualities of Don Alexis. Blandina, who knew him best, was praising him to the skies. The lovers gained the verdant enclosure in which they had passed the former night, and the married pair retired to another spot, where Toston thus addressed Blandina: "My child, life is a continued succession of good and evil, of joy and of grief. Yesterday, for instance, we came here gay as larks, and now we arrive as melancholy as owls." "Hey! what cause for grief can there be?" said his wife, "have you heard any bad news?" "The most distressing possible," replied he; "they want to separate Don Alexis and Donna Leonora." At the same time he gave her an account of what had passed between the Count de Gelves and his son.

Blandina was penetrated with grief at this recital. "You have cause," said she to her husband, "you have cause to distress yourself; nothing can be more mortifying than what you tell me. Unhappy Leonora," con-

tinued she, apostrophizing her mistress, "what a clap of thunder will this be to you! But is it then impossible to avert this evil? Will Toston, who possesses wit and ingenuity, make no exertions to preserve the lovers from the frightful destiny which is preparing for them?" "Pardon me," said he, "I am beating my brains for some expedient to prevent it, but I will confess to you that I can think of nothing with which I am satisfied." "An idea this moment presents itself to me," said the Creole, "and I think it ought not to be rejected: you are not ignorant that the Countess loves her son most affectionately; do you think that nothing may be done in that quarter?" "Quite the contrary," replied Toston, "I embrace the idea. I will go to-morrow to the Countess's levee, and request a private interview with her: I will give her a pathetic description of the situation in which Don Alexis is placed, and may perhaps be able to soften her, so that she may interest herself in favor of him and Leonora."

While this conversation passed between the

confidants, the two lovers were promising, swearing to each other an affection which should be proof against every obstacle that fortune could place in their way. In these sentiments they parted. The young nobleman proceeded with Toston, who on the way informed him of his design to try if, by his eloquence, he could prevail on the Countess, his mother, to protect his love. "I approve of your project," said Don Alexis, "and to render it the more efficacious, I will myself accompany you. I will throw myself at the feet of my mother, and embrace her knees, while you shall plead for me: I am sure that we shall gain our point."

In this opinion, they determined on having recourse to the measure proposed; and this is the detail of their success. They found the Countess de Gelves at her toilette. As soon as she saw her son and his confident, she sent all her women out of the room, and first addressing herself to Toston, "My friend," said she, "in what disposition has my son come hither? has he still any repugnance to linking his destiny with that of an amiable person

offered him by the prime minister of the kingdom?" "Madam," said Toston, "my master has vowed implicit obedience to your will; he is ready to do whatever you order him; but if you oblige him to marry the lady you propose, you may calculate on loosing your only son." "Yes, mother," said Don Alexis, throwing himself at her feet and kissing one of her hands, "Toston has told you the truth: if you force this wife on me against my inclination, you will kill me." "This is a strange thing," cried the Countess. "Is it possible to become prejudiced in so high a degree, against a person one has never seen? Wait till you have been introduced to the lady in question, and then, if you find her disagreeable, I have enough of a mother's fondness to oppose an union which must destroy your happiness, although in marriages among persons of our rank, the want of beauty is not thought a matter of much importance. But, added she, "if I may believe the description I have heard of this lady, she is extremely handsome." "Though she were more lovely than Venus," said Toston, "let us, if you please, Madam,

say no more about her. Love has been beforehand with the minister, by presenting to us a kind of divinity with whom we are enchanted."

"She must, indeed," said the Countess, "be possessed of a most uncommon beauty to have made so strong an impression. Does her birth correspond with her charms? I fear that on that side she has reason to complain." "Oh, no, Madam," returned Toston, "she is a young lady of quality. Leonora de Pedrera owes her birth to a gentleman of Antiquerra, and is, besides, niece to Donna Helena de Toralva."

The Countess no sooner heard these last words, than she burst into so violent a fit of laughter as completely disconcerted Toston and her son. "Madam," said the astonished young lord, "pray be kind enough to acquaint me with the cause of this extraordinary merriment; do you suspect us of wishing to impose on you with regard to Leonora's quality?" "Let me laugh without interruption," cried she, and redoubled her mirth, while the

master and the valet not knowing what construction to put on such behaviour, stared at her in stupid silence.

At length it pleased Heaven that her laughter should have an end; and when she had resumed her gravity, "Don Alexis," said she, "do not alarm yourself any more: you will not be obliged to renounce your beloved Leonora, for it is she herself whom the prime minister has destined for your wife. Donna Helena de Toralva is related to the Duchess de Olivarez, and it is these two ladies who have caused this match to be proposed to the Count de Gelves by the Count-Duke. Had I not cause to laugh?" pursued she. "Do you not think this a very droll adventure?" She then again burst into laughter, while her son and Toston now followed her example. The young lord and his confident then returned transported with joy, and proceeded immediately to Donna Helena's, where they found everybody in a good humour, the report of the approaching marriage of Donna Leonora and Don Alexis having already transpired

there. To sum up all in a few words, the nuptials were solemnized a few days after, with abundance of demonstrations of joy, both at the Hotels de Gelves and de Toralva.

Chapter Twelfth.

Of what took place after the marriage of Don Alexis de Gelves.—Toston's journey to Alcaraz, and his return to Madrid.—Don Cherubin has the satisfaction of hearing good news of Don Manoel and his family.

DONNA Helena, at whose house the wedding took place, loved her niece as much as if she were an only daughter; and, wishing not to part with her, this kind aunt gave up the half of her mansion for her accommodation. The first care of Don Alexis was to reward Toston for having contributed to his happiness. Not satisfied with making him a present of three hundred pistoles, he appointed him his steward, a post less considerable from what it was worth at that time, than from what it was likely to be at a future day. Leonora was not less generous to Blandina, who, more sensible to her mistress's friendship than to her own interest, was attached to her from

heart and inclination ; an extraordinary thing in a waiting woman.

One morning, Toston coming to me, said, "Signior Don Cherubin, I am going to take leave of you, and receive your commands. I shall set out in two days for Alcaraz, to gratify my desire of again beholding the authors of my existence. Don Alexis, my master, has allowed me to take this journey, on condition that I return in two months." "My child," said I, "the desire by which you are actuated is laudable, and it is right that you should be gratified ; but when you shall have passed a few days with persons so dear to you, return quickly to Madrid : you know the inconstancy of men of high rank ; you may lose your place, which is one that cannot fail to conduct you to a considerable fortune." "Oh, never fear," said he, "that I shall be much diverted by the company of my old friends : I have already imbibed the spirit of the Court ; I could not live in the country." "And by what conveyance," said I, "do you design going?" "On one of the best horses in our stables," replied he, "and followed by a lac-

quey from the house, who will be dressed in the livery of Gelves, and as well mounted as myself. The steward of a great house must not travel like a beggar." In effect, two days after, Toston set out upon an elegant horse, followed by a lacquey in brilliant livery, and charged with dispatches from me to my brothers-in-law.

During his absence, some changes took place favorable for the house of Gelves. Don Alexis, having paid assiduous court to the Count-Duke de Olivarez, was fortunate enough to please him so much, that that minister got him appointed gentleman of the King's Bedchamber; which was the most sincere testimony of regard which he could possibly give him, it being the disposition of his Excellency to place no one near the person of the monarch but such as he could repose confidence in himself. This was not all: Donna Leonora became at the same time maid of honor to the Queen, through the interest of the Lady Olivarez, who was *camarera mayor*;* so that

* Principal Lady of the Bedchamber.

Toston, at his return, found his master and mistress holding a rank at Court higher than when he left them.

The impatience of this new steward to give me an account of his journey would not permit him to visit his wife, nor even to wait on Don Alexis before he had come to me, with a haste expressive of his regard. It was not without emotion that I saw him enter my room; and, not knowing what he might have to tell me, I asked him tremblingly, if his news were calculated to please or distress me. "I bring you," replied he, "no news but what are good: Don Manoel and Don Gregoria are in the most perfect health, as are also their wives. These ladies, who are still very lovely, have enlarged the family: your sister, besides Francillo and the two daughters she had, she has now another son, who is at nurse; and her friend, besides the boy she had immediately after her marriage, has brought Don Manoel two sons in less than twenty months. All these children," added he, "both male and female, are in wonderful good health, and are

extremely genteel. Your daughter, among the rest, is as beautiful as the day."

"All this gives me pleasure," my friend, replied I; "but tell me, I entreat you, how my sister and my brothers-in-law listened to the recital which you, of course, gave them of my adventures. Did they appear to be much interested in my fortune?" "Assuredly," replied Toston; "they asked me a thousand questions, and I found it no easy matter to answer all their questions, each of them interrogating me in turn, and sometimes all together. But when I related to them the meeting with Monchique, and the manner in which he told us he had seduced Donna Paula, my auditors began to shed tears, particularly the ladies, who, seeing your wife fully justified, bitterly deplored her misfortune. They then questioned me about Donna Blanca: they asked me what was her character; and they had room to judge from my replies, that of all the favors Don Juan de Salzedo has conferred on you, that of giving you his daughter was not the least.

"I have now no more to do," added Toston,

“than to deliver to you the dispatches of which I am the bearer, from your family; and then allow me to quit you, in order to wait upon my master. I shall see whether my absence has injured me in his esteem.”

“No, my child,” replied I, “you will find Don Alexis just such as you left him. I took care, during your absence, to preserve you in his good graces. I have also some good news to announce to you; the King has honored this young nobleman with the post of Gentleman of the Bedchamber, a thing which will be to the advantage of your stewardship.”

I also informed the steward that Donna Leonora was in attendance on the Queen. “Good!” cried he, full of joy, “my wife is then at Court: that will fix me in Madrid.” “I hope so,” said I, “and that you will never again be troubled by the desire of seeing your own country.” “Oh, sir,” said he, “that is all over, I have bid it an eternal adieu. I went there, as you know, only to see my father and mother; I found them both dead and buried. I have shed over their graves the

tears which were due to them, and now I am entirely detached from the place of my birth." So saying, he delivered me his dispatches and left me.

Chapter Thirteenth.

Of the secret and curious conversation which Don Cherubin had one day with the Count de Gelves.—Relation of the manner in which the Duke de Ossuna entered Madrid, which proved the cause of his downfall.

ALTHOUGH the Count de Gelves had, as has been stated, brought immense wealth from the Indies, he had affected, through avarice and policy, not to imitate other Viceroys on their return from their governments. He appeared in the streets with but few attendants, and paid his visits, it may be said, without noise, and in a manner too modest for a Governor of Mexico. With regard to the presents he had made both to the King and the Infants Don Fernando and Don Carlos, they are not worth speaking of, as they consisted only in some ornaments of feathers, and such like trifles. For this reason, the public, who sometimes censure without cause, did not applaud his magnificent humor.

This nobleman was not ignorant of what was said of him in the world, and said to me one day, "I had rather pass for a miser than expose myself to ruin by a display which would only serve to excite envy. The example of the Duke de Ossuna, who has just died in prison, ought to afford instruction to Viceroy. This great man would probably still have been alive, if he had not had the imprudence to make his entry into Madrid with a pomp more suitable to a sovereign than a governor who is recalled in order that he may give an account of his administration; if he had not made such rich presents to the Court, and if, in fine, he had not exposed his wealth to the eyes of his enemies, and those who were envious of him. Perhaps you never heard of this pompous entry. I must give you a detail of it, less to excite your admiration at its magnificence, than to show you the ostentation of the Viceroy of Sicily and Naples.

"Four trumpeters, with twelve Neapolitan and Sicilian guards, began the march. The maitre d'hotel on horseback, and twenty-four

mules with gold embroidered housings, conducted by twenty grooms, preceding three litters and three superb carriages belonging to the Duchess de Ossuna, which the maitres d'hotel of herself and her son followed with twenty horses, led by as many grooms.— After these came the major-domo of the Duke, accompanied by twelve pages on horseback pressed in the Spanish, and twelve halberdeers in the Sicilian costume. Then Don Juan Telles, at the head of thirty Spanish, Neapolitan and Sicilian gentlemen, all richly dressed in the Hungarian fashion, and mounted upon valuable horses. Afterwards the Duke, in the same costume, appeared in a most magnificent carriage with Donna Isabella de Sandoval, his daughter-in-law, having four tall footmen at each door, and twenty halberdeers, followed by thirty carriages full of relations and friends, without counting six other in reserve. Finally, this indiscreet and silly procession was concluded by a crowd of officers, pages and Turkish slaves.

“It was thus,” continued the Count de Gelves, “that the Duke de Ossuna entered

Madrid, amid the acclamations of an immense concourse of spectators, attracted from all parts by the sight. You may well conceive that such an entry did not diminish the number of his secret enemies ; and, to add to his indiscretion, he exposed during three days at his house, to the curiosity of the public, the riches he had brought from Italy, taking a foolish pleasure in showing them to the Spaniards as spoils taken from the Turks, and glorious monuments of the victories he had obtained over those infidels. I have not therefore done ill," added the Grand Equerry, "in pursuing a conduct the reverse of his, especially as I have come from a government in which all the world suspects me of having acquired immense wealth. By my modest entry, I have disappointed the envy which I should not have failed to excite by an air of greater opulence."

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Chapter Fourteenth.

Of Don Manoel's arrival at Madrid.—The extreme joy which that Cavalier and Don Cherubin felt at again meeting after so long a separation, and of the arrangements which they made not to part again.

TOSTON had not been a week returned to Madrid, when one morning while I was writing in my closet, I was informed that Don Manoel de Pedrilla had arrived. I immediately started up to receive a man who was so dear to me. We held each other long in a mutual embrace, and both testified by tears rather than by words the joy we felt at meeting. The remembrance of Donna Paula affected us at first, and we could not refuse our tears to the memory of that innocent adulteress, in spite of the grief which she had caused us both; but we speedily passed from grief to joy, and began to converse about our family. "We have some lovely children," said Don Manoel. "If Toston has given

you a faithful description, he must have told you that Donna Teresa, your daughter, is excessively pleasing, and that my son, Don Ignacio, is a pretty boy. As for your nephew, Francillo, who is now called Don Francisco de Clevillente, he is no longer a child; he is a well grown cavalier, and fit to serve the King.

"Having spoken of the children," continued Don Manoel, "let us now speak of their mothers. Ismenia and Donna Francisca are still pretty women. I am more fond than ever of one, and Don Gregorio has for the other an attachment, the warmth of which seems daily to augment." "You delight me, my friend," interrupted I, "by informing me that you all four live in such a perfect union. Why can I not go and partake the sweets of your society!" "Why, what hinders you?" said Don Manoel; "are you not master of your actions!" "No," replied I, "the Count de Gelves will not allow my father-in-law to leave him: and he, a slave to that nobleman's desires has the complaisance to sacrifice to him the

inclination he has to repose himself after his long labours. On my part, gratitude and friendship bind me so strongly to Don Juan, that I make it a point of duty not to abandon him." "In these sentiments," said Don Manoel, "I recognize my friend. So then, it seems, our ladies and myself must be disappointed in the hope we had formed of having your company and your wife's." "I should ask nothing better," replied I, "than to pass with them and you the rest of my days; but you see what obstacles are opposed to such a desire." "Well," said Don Manoel, after having reflected some minutes, "since we cannot engage you to leave Madrid, I must prevail on our ladies to come and settle here: this is what I shall propose to them, and I think they will readily comply with my suggestion."

"I applaud the idea," said I, "and hope that they may be pleased with the project, If you be eloquent enough to persuade them to that, I will undertake to hire a house sufficiently large to contain our whole family; I am in a situation to do so, and even to

defray all the expenses of living in it. Return, then, as speedily as possible, to Alcazar; persuade, if you can, the ladies to come and live in Madrid, and bring them hither with you. We shall lead a delicious life together. In our house will be seen only joy, and there the best of company will be met with."

Don Manoel, impatient for the arrival of so happy a period, hastened home; but, before his departure, I introduced him to Salzedo, who received him in a manner that enchanted him. Nor was he less satisfied with the civilities he received from my wife, who, looking upon him as my best friend, thought she could never treat him with sufficient attention. When we parted, he said to me, "Don Cherubin, I admire your happiness. You have entered into a most amiable family. You have a wife worthy of your tenderness, and a father-in-law who merits all your devotion to him. I shall describe these two in such terms to Cle villente and our ladies, as will contribute no little towards the success of my design."

Chapter Fiftenth.

In consequence of what event the project of Don Manoel and Don Cherubin was not carried into execution.—Don Juan de Salzedo is made Corregidor of Alcaraz.

I HOPED, or rather, I entertained no doubt, that Pedrilla would be able to prevail on the ladies, and was already employed in looking out for a house; but it was an unnecessary trouble, as I shall presently explain. One day after the Count de Gelves had been with the prime minister, he closeted himself with Salzedo, and addressed him thus: "Don Juan, you will be surprised at what I am about to say to you. I have just been with the Count-Duke, with whom I had a conversation which turned upon yourself. 'Count,' said he, 'you have about you a man who is not agreeable to me; it is Don Juan de Salzedo. He was secretary to the Duke de Lerma, and afterwards to the Duke de Uzeda; in a word, he is a creature of the house

of Sandoval. I think this is saying enough to induce you to get rid of him. However, as I know that you esteem him, and that he deserves to be recompensed for the services which he has done the state, the King appoints him Corregidor of the city of Alcaraz, in New Castile.'

"You know this minister," continued the Grand Equerry. "You know that he is full of whims, and that he is absolute in anything which he commands. If, consulting only my own friendship for you, I were to refuse compliance on this occasion, I must make up my mind to break with him forever; a thing which might be disastrous to me in its consequences, as it is dangerous to have for an enemy, a minister who governs both the monarchy and the monarch.

"I am sorry to lose you," continued he, "but we must separate. You see plainly it is a matter of necessity." "My lord," replied Salzedo, "to that I have nothing to reply. It would not be right that you should quarrel for such a trifle with a man who has everything in his power. With regard

to the place with which it is intended to honour me, I could well do without it, being, thanks to your bounty, in a situation which leaves me nothing to wish for. Nevertheless, I have reasons for not refusing it. Alcaraz is a city well known to my son-in-law, and there reside his family and friends, who will do everything to make me happy. Since I must depart from your Excellency and from Madrid, it is a consolation to be sent to the very place in Spain which I would choose in preference to any other." "I am glad it is so," said the Count; if I regret parting with you, at least I shall have the satisfaction of believing that you are comfortable."

After this interview, Don Juan came to me. "Here are some great news," said he, recounting to me at the same time what had been just said to him by the Grand Equerry. He then asked me what I thought of it. "It appears to me," replied I, "that the Count is terribly afraid of losing the good graces of the minister, and that he seems well disposed to sacrifice everything to his fear."

As to the rest we ought to rejoice at this event. We have been a long while attached by complaisance alone to this nobleman; and since he himself affords us the opportunity of quitting him with honour, let us avail ourselves of it without ceremony. Let us go and join my brothers-in-law. They will be delighted, as will likewise their wives, at seeing their society increased by three persons whose company will be so far from tiresome. I will, if you think fit, send this day an express to Don Manoel, to apprise him that, having been gratified by the King with the post of Corregidor of Alcaraz, you are going to set out in order to take possession of it. He will be charmed with this intelligence; for I am sure he would rather bid us welcome in Alcaraz, than come to us in Madrid."

My father-in-law had no sooner informed me that he was ready to follow me, than I dispatched a courier to Pedrilla, to inform him of our design; and, in the letter which I sent him, I pointed out that we should pass near Cuenca.

Chapter Sixteenth.

Don Juan de Salzedo sets out from Madrid with his daughter and Don Cherubin.—Their arrival at Alcaraz.—The reception they met with.—End of the history of the Bachelor of Salamanca.

DON Juan de Salzedo, after having returned thanks to the prime minister, and taken before the King the necessary oaths, set about the preparations for his journey, which were speedily finished. Our departure from Madrid was not quite so splendid as the entry of the Duke de Ossuna; but it had, notwithstanding, an air of opulence that did us honour. Three litters, one of which was filled with the Corregidor, *plena ipso*, the other with my wife and myself, and the third with two waiting-women, followed twelve mules laden with our effects, and ornamented with fine sounding bells. Add to this five or six servants mounted on very handsome horses, of which the Grand Equerry had made us a present. Indeed, our equipage

somewhat resembled that of a Viceroy who is going to take possession of his government.

We proceeded by short stages to Cuença, where we found Don Manoel, who had been awaiting our arrival two days. After a thousand embraces on both sides, this cavalier informed us, that the moment he received my letter he had set out to Cuença, whence he proposed to conduct us to the village of Bonillo, to a farm which belonged to him there, and in which he had left his wife, with my sister and Don Gregorio. The more speedily to reach this farm, we hastened to resume our journey; and there, in effect, we met Clevilente and the two ladies, who were no less anxious to see me than I to embrace them. Here were embraces and compliments in abundance. "Signor Don Juan," said my sister to Salzedo, "what pleasure it is to me to see a gentleman to whom my brother has so many obligations! But of all the good you have bestowed on him, that which I most value is having united his destiny to that of this amiable child." At these words, she threw her arms round the neck of Blanca, whom she had

already more than once embraced. Ismenia was equally lavish of her caresses to my wife, who, not to be behindhand with these ladies, returned them kiss for kiss.

On the other hand Dan Manoel, Salzedo, Gregorio and myself, were acting nearly the same scene. We had all four, for about an hour, nothing but a confused conversation intermingled with embraces.

After this we resumed our gravity, and the new Corregidor had every reason to be satisfied with the obliging discourse which was addressed to him both by ladies and gentlemen. He told me two or three times in private that he was charmed with my brothers-in-law, and still more with their wives, who appeared to him, he said, to have the manners of princesses. I was inwardly amused with this idea, for I thought at the moment of the source whence they derived these airs of grandeur. We rested some days at the farm, where, by Don Manoel's precaution, nothing wanting; and at length repaired to Alcaraz, which is only about five or six leagues distant.

Our equipage dazzled the eyes of the citi-

zens of Alcaraz. "This is not," said one, "our poor defunct Corregidor, whose whole equipage consisted in two old mules." "No, faith," said another, "it is not an ordinary Corregidor, but a Viceroy who is sent us." The populace, who had placed themselves under arms, the more honourably to receive their new magistrate, now gave a triple discharge of musketry. We alighted at the Hotel de Pedrilla, where we had no sooner entered, than all the Superiors of the religious orders came to harangue my father-in-law in Latin; who, in order to let them see whom they addressed, replied to each in the same language, and thus gave his visitors a favourable opinion of him. After the monks, the nobility came with their compliments, and he replied in the tone of a courtier.

To say the rest in a few words, he took possession of his charge; and soon, by his vigilance, his integrity, his equitable judgments, and his extensive information, he made the inhabitants of Alcaraz sensible that they had for Corregidor a man capable of governing a kingdom. As he joined to his merit as a judge

all the qualities of an elegant man, he gained, without difficulty, the esteem and friendship of everybody.

With such a father-in-law have I now the happiness of living, sometimes at Alcaraz, at Don Manoel's, sometimes at the castle of Elche, which is but three small leagues distant, and which we purchased with some of the Mexicans' money, or at the castle of Don Gregorio de Clevillente, whose wife agrees wonderfully well with my own, although they are sisters-in-law.

THE END.

